University of Alberta

Queen Anna of Denmark: Social Roles, Political Agency and Gender Expectations at the Jacobean Court, 1603-1619

by

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Abstract

Traditional historiographical interpretations of Anna of Denmark, queen consort of King James VI and I, have focused on her supposed frivolity, foolishness, and insignificance as a political force at the Jacobean court. This work offers an analysis of Anna that frames her as a skilled social actor and an influential member of her husband's court. In doing so, this paper strives to stress the political agency that was exercised by elite women in the early modern period, despite their official exclusion from the "high" institutions of political power such as Parliament, the Privy Council and the legal courts. Building upon sociological and anthropological concepts, this work demonstrates some of the mechanisms and performative strategies utilized by Jacobean aristocratic women throughout their careers within the orbit of the court. As a point of entry into a textured analysis of the political and cultural abilities of these women, this paper proposes the study of the role of the most hierarchically advantaged of elite women – the queen consort. My central claim is that aristocratic women in early modern England operated as skilled political agents through a number of venues, which included, but was not limited to, those provided by cultural forms of expression.

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Introduction: Elite Women, Role Expectations and the Court: Theoretical Stances and Historiographical Interpretations

This study represents an attempt to redefine the role of an often denigrated (or utterly ignored) figure in early modern English history, Anna of Denmark, Queen Consort to King James VI of Scotland and I of England. In undertaking this, I also hope to illustrate the viability of a more nuanced methodology for analyzing the political, social and cultural roles performed by other elite women in the period. One of the central stances of this work is a belief in the benefits of the incorporation of theories arising from anthropological and sociological theorists to the study of the past. Consequently, while I will discuss matters that are the usual purview of the historian, this analysis will also be infused with references to ideas formed in other social science disciplines. While an examination of Queen Anna's career as queen of England will form the central component of this work, it is first necessary to offer an analysis of the traditional historiography surrounding the role of women in early modern England. From this first layer of discussion, I will move to a consideration of the roles and careers of elite women (those who occupied the ranks of the aristocracy and moved within the political and social orbit of the Jacobean court) in general. I will then move to a discussion of the normative social roles and expectations held of queens consort. My ultimate intention is to focus specifically on Queen Anna of Denmark, an individual who, despite having been greatly trivialized by many scholars, typifies many of the issues that the other portions of this work raises. My goal is to provide the reader with layers of analysis that move in a trajectory from the general to the specific.

While many of the points raised in this study can be said to be applicable both to elite women and those from the middling and lower ranks, this works intends to focus solely on aristocratic women. The recent expansion of social history has generated a plethora of sophisticated works which examine the political, social and cultural roles of non-elite women in an engaging and enlightening manner. I acknowledge the debt in which I stand to these efforts; however, I wish to redirect some of these earlier insights to a segment of the early modern population which has not received as in-depth a level of analysis in recent years: elite and aristocratic women, queens consort, and, particularly, Queen Anna of Denmark. Barbara Harris's recent study on the careers of elite women at

the early Tudor courts has been an invaluable resource for me.[1] This study has also been formed through reference to a variety of works dealing with queens consort, although (despite much insightful work on the role and careers of medieval queens consort and those that reigned post-1660), there is little work yet done concerning the roles of these uniquely placed women in the period 1485-1660.[2]

I seek to provide an analysis of elite women in early Stuart England that is infused with epistemological stances drawn from other social science disciplines. Many historical studies use social theory with varying degrees of success, and a number of commentators continue to question the effectiveness of the use of theory as a mode of historical explanation. While theory (be it sociological, anthropological, or literary) has its limitations, as indeed do all forms of explanation, I am operating under the primary conviction that social theory is necessary in history because it provides a mechanism for framing and interpreting knowledge on a basic epistemological level and because, "observations are understandable only in terms of the frames we put around them."[3] A critic might shift the interpretation of the arguments made in this work by deploying a different set of frames, but I hope that the theoretical stances employed here create a dialogue between theory and narrative that, while not necessarily rendering this study definitive, will provide a deeper level of understanding. My goal is not to "prove" any particular theory to the exclusion of others. I seek, rather, to provide a more meaningful discussion through the adoption of certain theoretical stances that can equip the historian with multiple points of entry and a means of contextualizing political power, queens consort and aristocratic women at the early Jacobean court. I want to expand upon recent scholarship that seeks to rehabilitate both Queen Anna and other elite women in terms of their capability for agency in the politics of the period. This will be achieved by focusing

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[1] Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). See also, J. Goldsmith, *All the Queen's Women: The Changing Place and Perception of Aristocratic Women in Elizabethan England, 1558-1628* (Unpublished PhD Thesis: Northwestern University, 1987) for an example of an analysis that deals with many of the same issues, within the same time period, which will be raised here.

[2] See Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe, 1660-1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Orr ed., *Queenship in Britain, 1660-1837: Royal Patronage, Court Culture, and Dynastic Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), and John Carmi Parsons, ed., *Medieval Queenship* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

[3] Philip Manning, *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), pp. 118-119. For an excellent discussion of the benefits of social theory in the study of the historical past, see Leeanna Carol Ryan's *Mistris Turner's Tale: Law and Disorder in Early Stuart England* (Unpublished MA Thesis: University of Alberta, 2002).

on the symbolic language, cultural expression, and mechanisms of role manipulation that such women used to advance their political agendas.

At the centre of this work is a view of culture as a symbolic system, one that can be seen as an expression of "piled up structures of inference and implication."[4] This view treats culture as a living entity, rife with symbolic meaning, but also malleable and with a degree of fluidity. Because "it is impossible to have social relation without symbolic acts," attention must be paid to the early modern individual's symbolic representations in everyday life, representations which affirmed the existing social order.[5] These symbolic acts would also have been instantly readable in early modern culture because, in Clifford Geertz's words, culture is an "acted document," a public document that provides context and meaning to social actions.[6] Culture is social reality, the sphere in which we all operate, and it is, above all, public because "cultural categories are public matters."[7]

Observers understand social actions only because they conform to cultural meanings that are public and therefore common to those viewing them. Hence, culture is not a static concept that exists as an omnipresent entity. It should be viewed instead as an animated and changing social construction that contains a multitude of symbolic aspects that provide meaning to everyday life. Social reality is constructed through the framework of a symbolic universe that effectively orders all facets of knowledge and experience to ensure that it is self-perpetuating and self-sustaining from generation to generation. It becomes impossible to understand culture and human action and thought outside this framework. Social reality becomes legitimate not because it expresses accurately the commonly held values of a society but because it *defines* those values through its ability to construct virtually all forms of knowledge that we have concerning social reality. "In other words, legitimation is not just a matter of 'values.' It always implies 'knowledge' as well."[8] There is a propensity among members of a cultural grouping to select responses from a particular cultural repertoire according to the demands and expectations of the situation. Social performance implies social knowledge

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[4] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 7.
[5] Mary Doulgas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 2002 [1966]), p. 78. Douglas further developed the theme of the symbolic nature of culture and, along Durkheimian lines, the importance of ritual in *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London: Routledge, 2003 [1970]).
[6] Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, p. 10.
[7] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 48.
[8] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 93.

and participation in social activities and the existence of a social structure entails that participants have a comprehensive understanding of the social expectations placed upon them and their actions.

These ideas can be of great importance for understanding the agency exhibited by elite women in early modern England. While denied official access to the levers of political power and denounced as inferior, women were able to exploit and manipulate effectively the culture that surrounded them. Early modern society was neither static nor rigid; it had room for role negotiation. Jacobean woman, as with all moderately-skilled social actors, had an innate understanding of the array of cultural roles which they were expected to perform in their society. Like all social participants, they had an understanding of the nature and values of the social centre. The centre is

> a phenomenon of the realm of values and beliefs. The centre is the realm in which resides the order of symbols which govern a given society. It is the centre because it is the ultimate and irreducible; and it is felt to be such by many who cannot give explicit articulation to its irreducibility.[9]

The centre is representative of the "structure of activities, of roles and persons, within the network of institutions. It is in these roles that the values and beliefs which are central are embodied and propounded."[10] In this sense, the centre or institution constructs all forms of knowledge that it is possible for individuals to have or to conceive of. Social actors form their personas and perform their roles based on their knowledge of this social construction. It can be seen that "the symbolic universe is conceived of as the matrix of *all* socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings; the entire historic society and the entire biography of the individual are seen as events taking place *within* this universe."[11]

The continued existence of the centre is due to its ability to project a central value system, one that essentially provides the basis for all cultural forms and expressions. It is within the context of this central value system that all individual action occurs and is rendered meaningful to others. Membership and acceptability within a society are constituted by one's adoption and perpetuation of the values of the centre, of the

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[9] Edward Shils, *Centre and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 3.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, p. 96, Berger and Luckmann's emphasis. For more discussion of the socially-constructed nature of culture and the primary role played by the centre or institution within society, see Mary Douglas, *How Institutions Think* (London: Routledge, 1987).

institution. In this respect, a level of consensus is always present regarding the nature of the social order and the central value system. Women in early modern England were a part of this social construction, this centre. Through the roles that they performed in the course of everyday life and the symbolic forms of representation that they utilized, they daily reaffirmed the existing order even as they simultaneously manipulated it through the techniques of role performance that they employed. To understand how, through role manipulation, early modern women conformed to the existing social construction of culture even as they exhibited agency in a society that officially stated that they had none, the theories of the sociologist Erving Goffman are insightful.

Goffman advocated a dramaturgical view of social performance and interaction that viewed them as pieces of self-presentation and performance management engaged in by the individual within their context as a social actor. For Goffman, the self is defined primarily by the roles that one enacts within the everyday course of social life. The performance of roles is itself dictated by the expectations of the institution and the central value system. When an individual engages in a performance they are, therefore, "guided by social values or norms concerning involvement" which are inculcated through the symbolic universe and are understood and accepted by both the performers and the audience.[12] In this sense, role is at the centre of society as "the basic unit of socialization."[13] Social roles serve as an underlying code of human behaviour that is based on a series of social rules, propagated by the centre, which "form a deep structural code which generates an infinite variety of surface manifestations."[14]

Social roles, then, are based on commonly-shared expectations and values that inform the individual of the proper manner in which to conduct a successful performance. It is one's knowledge of the social universe, of the centre, that determines the extent of one's ability to be a successful social performer. To perform effectively requires that the individual have an implicit understanding of the audience's social expectations and that he or she deploy a range of performative skills that assist him or her in their production of a performance that meets those expectations. Performative skills were conceived of by Goffman as a host of techniques that serve social actors as "modes of managing one's

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[12] Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behaviour* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1967), p. 45.
[13] Erving Goffman, *Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1961, p. 86.
[14] Manning, *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology*, p. 78.

involvements."[15] The requisite knowledge for engaging in social performances is provided by the institution, which, as we have seen, structures reality and social knowledge. Thus, "both person and role are equally dependent on social definition."[16] Knowledge of one's social role comes only through social definition. In this sense, "the self is a social product."[17] Likewise, self-identity is formed through reference to the many overlapping roles that we all engage in throughout our lives. It is because our knowledge, itself socially constructed, of the institution or central value system forms our understanding of role performance that social roles can be seen as the most fundamental method through which the dominant institution of society is perpetuated and maintained.[18] "By playing roles, the individual participates in a social world. By internalizing these roles, the same world becomes subjectively real to him…roles *represent* the institutional order."[19] Social roles function as a "ritually organized system of social activity," that affirms the centre.[20] Reality itself and our most basic conceptions of self-identity are constituted by the roles that we perform. The basic parameters of social and self-knowledge are defined through a socially constructed universe and this ensures that "the character one performs and one's self are somewhat equated, and this self-as-character is usually seen as something housed within the body of its possessor."[21] An individual's interior self cannot be distinguished from the outward performances enacted by that actor – the self is a product of the performance and the performance is a product of the self, so to speak.[22]

Role performance entails that a social actor will deploy certain performative skills to ensure a successful performance. Our knowledge of what skills we will need to utilize arises from an inherent understanding (that we all possess) of what is expected of us socially within the context of a particular role. This knowledge is "maintained through background assumptions that inform people about the expected range of behaviour in diverse social situations."[23] Essentially, the social performer has knowledge of what the

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[15] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), p. 35.
[16] Ann Branaman, "Goffman's Social Theory," in Charles Lemert and Ann Branaman, eds., *The Goffman Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. li.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. xlvi.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. lxiv.
[19] Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, p. 74, Berger and Luckmann's emphasis.
[20] Goffman, *Interaction Ritual*, p. 45.
[21] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, p. 252.
[22] Branaman, "Goffman's Social Theory," pp. l-lxvii.
[23] Manning, *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology*, p. 93.

performance should look like, how it should be manifested in the front region.[24] Therefore, "when an actor takes on an established social role, usually he finds that a particular front has already been established for it."[25] The goal of self-presentation, of role performance, is to meet social expectations, to conform to the social construction of reality. This entails "if an individual is to give expression to ideal standards during his performance, then he will have to forgo or conceal action which is inconsistent with these standards."[26] Performative techniques, such as *Idealization*, serve to ensure that "a performance is 'socialized,' molded, and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it is presented."[27]

The relationship between the centre and the individual, between culture and the social actor, is fundamentally a dialectical one. There is a degree of flexibility that can be associated with social roles and self-presentation and the use of the term institution to describe the social order should not be read as a description of something that is eternally fixed and static. There is latitude for individual expression and interpretation with respect to the central value system. Hence, individuals have the capacity to act as agents within an established order. In this respect,

> society entails ongoing negotiation between the individuals engaged in their own multitudinous activities and lines of action…it is the study of many individual lives recurrently intersecting in symbolic routines which exhibit shared forms and endlessly variable individual meanings.[28]

Role performance, symbolic representation and the subtle manipulation of cultural expectations all enabled elite early modern women to operate successfully as political agents within a social structure that constructed and guided virtually all aspects of their everyday life.

Until recently, studies of political activity in Jacobean England focused primarily on the official institutions and channels of power. The picture that emerged from such works depicted a society where political control and influence were located in the law

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[24] This is the area that Goffman defined as the physical region both of performative behaviour and of the location wherein a performance is executed. Things such as appearance, setting, facial expression, props, etc. are all manifestations of the frontal region. See Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, pp. 22-30.
[25] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, p. 27.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.
[28] Nigel Rapport and Joanna Overing, *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 200.

courts, the Privy Council, Parliament and (at the top of this hierarchical ordering) the monarch. Political power in this schema can be viewed as a relatively static and inflexible commodity; one simply possessed it or one did not. Typically, the ability of an individual to exercise political influence was dependent on their ability to access one of the official sites of power that I have alluded to previously. With the exception of the fifty years 1553 to 1603, when England was ruled first by Mary I and then Elizabeth I, this traditional view of early modern politics has been only applicable to men, although certain recent works have illustrated that many women exercised social influence, even power, within their parish communities in the localities.[29] However, while these studies have indicated that women often held positions of local political influence in townships across the country, they were not eligible to serve as justices, members of Parliament or Privy Counsellors.[30] Hence, conventional histories have tended to label women as non-entities when it came to "high" politics. "The very definition of politics underlying the dominant historiography has thus made it seem both natural and inevitable to write history as if the world of high politics, the world that really counted, were exclusively male."[31]

Convincing evidence for this stance comes from the patriarchal rhetoric of the Stuart period itself. Everything from conduct books to sermons to King James's public speeches aggressively stressed the inferior nature of womankind and whole-heartedly approved of their isolation from political ("public") affairs. Before marriage, daughters were depicted as wholly under the control of their parents, particularly their fathers, and, after marriage, women were portrayed as dominated by their husbands. The traditional picture was of an all-encompassing patriarchy wherein women lived in a constant state of victimization and subordination brought about by a total lack of agency.[32] This was the

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[29] For an excellent and informative study of communal life in the localities and the distribution of local influence, especially within the context of the structure of the parish, and the extent to which it extended to women, see Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

[30] For a detailed analysis of the roles and experiences of women in everyday life in early modern England, see Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) and Antonia Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel: Women's Lot in Seventeenth-Century England* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984).

[31] Barbara J. Harris, "Women and Politics in Early Tudor England," *The Historical Journal*, 33 (1990), p. 259.

[32] It is important to note, however, that while "patriarchy" is a useful, modern explanatory term, it was not a concept familiar to inhabitants of the early modern period. Thus, while we may use the term for convenience, it is not something that we can understand as actually being present and tangible in the period. See Lorrie Kostelyk, *'Households,' Agency, and Gentlewomen in Seventeenth-Century England* (Unpublished MA Thesis: University of Alberta, 2002).

image that much early modern literature depicted and, until recently, it has been accepted by historians as an accurate representation of early modern society. This has led to a situation wherein, predominantly, the "most chosen generalization was that women everywhere were universally dominated, and everywhere men tended to have more prestige."[33]

Within the recent past, however, many historians have begun to move beyond this one-dimensional view of gender and the role of women. They have begun to ask insightful and meaningful questions about the way gender actually functioned. These recent studies are admirable in their efforts and have greatly improved our understanding of early modern society. Above all, they have illustrated that patriarchy in the period "was never simply hegemonic but always contained contradictions, compromises, and sources of instability."[34] There was a constant interplay in the period between agency and subordination. It is possible to craft a more nuanced representation of women's agency in the period once we question the cultural reality portrayed in the posturing of the patriarchal rhetoric that abounded during the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries. Whatever the official ideology of the day, women routinely acted with agency within a system that simultaneously sought to restrict their capacity for agency.[35] In short, there was a substantial incongruence between the manner in which early modern women actually lived their daily lives and the ideology propagated by the patriarchal central value system.

The most prominent political analogy of early modern England was that drawn between the family and state. In this picture, the family was regarded as a microcosm of the state. Just as the king was the head of state, so was the father the head of the household and family. Likewise, to question of the authority of either the king or a father was both to act treasonously and to speak against a divinely-ordained hierarchical institution. This view was alluded to in countess works of the period and also found expression in the conduct book, of sorts, that King James VI of Scotland and I of England penned for his son and heir Henry in the years before he acceded to the English throne. In his work, which was intended to educate his son on the duties and behaviour required

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[33] Rapport and Overing, *Social and Cultural Anthropology*, p. 145.
[34] Anthony Fletcher, "Manhood, the Male Body, Courtship, and the Household in Early Modern England," *History*, 84 (1999), p. 420.
[35] For a discussion of this see, Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, pp. 17-26.

of a king, James wrote of the husband and wife relationship, "he are the head, shee is your bodie: it is your office to command and hers to obey."[36] From this and other literary sources, many historians have often assumed that "both conjugal and parent-child relations were authoritarian and rigidly patriarchal and the emotional climate of the family was marked by respect and obligation rather than by warmth or intimacy."[37]

This long-held vision of the historical past and the gender order in the early modern period has been modified in the past few decades due to the influx of ideas arising from the feminist movement, postmodernism, and an array of theories arising from other social science disciplines. Hence, historians, while recognizing "the crucial importance of the patriarchal family as the bedrock of social order in early modern England," are moving to a stance that suggests this was more the ideal than the reality of everyday life.[38] As Keith Wrightson states, "conventional definitions of roles and the actual performance of them in everyday life can be quite different things."[39] This goes hand-in-hand with recent scholarship which reinvestigates traditionally-held assumptions of the place of women in early modern society and asks different sorts of questions concerning how the gender order actually operated and formed the social roles and experiences of women themselves. In short, historians have begun to ask, "what kind of lives did women *really* lead in England?"[40] The results of this new direction in social history have been both promising and instructive for students of the period. A more subtle analysis of women and their role in society is being developed which emphasizes the grey areas of the gender order and the level of compromise that existed between the ideal and the reality. Historical accounts of the period have moved to the acknowledgement that "notwithstanding the well-known prescriptive literature, which tends to be normative and conservative, actual behaviour and ideas were variable, nuanced, unstable, and shifting."[41]

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[36] King James VI and I, *Basilikon Doron Or His Maiesties Instructions to his Dearest Sonne Henry the Prince* (Menston: The Scholar Press, 1969 [1603: STC 14350]), p. 98.
[37] Keith Wrightson, "The Family in Early Modern England: Continuity and Change," in Stephen Taylor, Richard Connors and Clyve Jones, eds., *Hanoverian Britain and Empire: Essays in Memory of Philip Lawson* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 1998), pp. 2-3
[38] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 204.
[39] Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1982), p. 92.
[40] Antonia Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel*, p. 6, Fraser's emphasis.
[41] David Cressy, "Private Lives, Public Performance, and Rites of Passages," in Betty S. Travitsky and Adele F. Seeff, eds., *Attending to Women in Early Modern England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), p. 190.

"Power is a concept which is often reified," but much recent work by those involved in the social sciences has begun to deconstruct traditional conceptions of the manner in which power operates within a society.[42] Working along Foucaultian lines, historians have revised traditional views of power as a static commodity and adopted a definition of it as something much more flexible and inconstant, something which can only be known and glimpsed through its exercise. In this respect, all power can be seen to exist "within dynamic social relationships."[43] This allows for a clearer understanding of the informal way in which power manifests itself and of the many channels (besides the official, formal ones) through which it is capable of flowing. Power, particularly political power, cannot be conceived of as functioning only in the context of a simplistic dichotomy of official/unofficial venues (with the unofficial venues being regarded as less important).[44] Power should be viewed as flowing through a continuum, slipping seamlessly from the official sites of its exercise to unofficial areas. The lines between the formal and the informal, the public and the private, are much less rigid than many of us concede.

One should not equate the fact that women were denied access to the official arenas of power in early modern England with a belief in their utter and complete lack of agency.[45] After all, "plenty of political action takes place outside parliament or civic government."[46] Women exercised political agency in the period and, while not officially sanctioned in conduct books and sermons, their political influence was recognized and largely accepted by contemporaries. While "evidence about women's activism during this period tends to be obscured by its informal nature," political influence was diffuse and fluid in early modern England and women were capable of operating within political spheres.[47] Paul Monod insightfully noted in a recent study

> Power was manifested [in early modern Europe] through strategies of political action and publicity that involved wide segments of the population, not simply through the imposition of hegemonic concepts by an elite. No kind of cultural

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[42] Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 76.
[43] Karen Lee Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree': The Court Masques of Queen Anna of Denmark* (Unpublished PhD Thesis: Case Western Reserve University, 1994), p. 12.
[44] Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 289.
[45] *Ibid.*
[46] Anne Laurence, *Women in England, 1500-1760: A Social History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1994), pp. 241-242.
[47] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 347.

> authority – whether over the body, the self, that state, the dictionary, or the universe – can be understood as an unproblematic or unchallengeable totality.[48]

None of this, of course, is to assert that women were not subordinated to men in the period. It would be foolish to deny that early modern England was a patriarchal society, indeed a more rigid one than we today inhabit, but it was not as absolute or all encompassing as many scholars have described. This aspect of early modern culture and the role of women "is very far from being the whole story, however, and we must be careful to avoid the painting of too black a picture. Women's subordination was axiomatic."[49] Obviously, as most recent commentators stress, women did not play the same political roles as men, but this does not negate the level of political activity that they did engage in.[50] Early modern society was a patriarchal one and, "Jacobean women did not of course float free of the ideology and institutions that structured Jacobean society."[51] However, while still acknowledging the second-class position occupied by women in society, historians are simultaneously asserting that the ideal presented in conduct books and sermons from the period was just that, an ideal. Literature in the period, from conduct books to plays to political tracts, adhered to a series of tropes that were highly misogynistic in nature. Recent scholarship, however, has suggested that such literature reflected commercial interests as opposed to deeply held beliefs about the nature of society. Thus, such sources should be viewed with a degree of scepticism.[52] The conduct books and sermons of the period frequently discussed gender and gender relations as absolute and fixed, with the female subordinate to the male at all times, especially within the institution of marriage. Thus,

> To the authors of the conduct books, conjugal relations should be conducted according to a pattern which was both natural and divinely ordained. Its most essential element was the recognition of the supreme authority of the husband.[53]

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[48] Paul Kléber Monod, *The Power of Kings: Monarchy and Religion in Europe, 1589-1715* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 328.
[49] Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 91.
[50] An insightful and balanced examination of women's political roles, in general, and how one woman, in particular, operated within those roles in the period can be found in Ryan's *Mistris Turner's Tale*.
[51] Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 3.
[52] See Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540-1620* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986) for a discussion of this theme.
[53] Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 90.

However, within the household and the community at large, women played as important and public a role as men, and they were not excluded from such activity on the basis of gender. Whatever the lofty ideal of gender, "in practice, domestic relations were shot through with ambiguities and inconsistencies."[54] The work of recent scholarship has been instrumental in sketching a more textured portrait of the role of women in period, one that stresses their ability to act as agents. Scholars have noted that "the whole success of early modern English patriarchy, it can be argued, lay in its flexibility and its capacity, as a gender system, to sustain modifications, cushioning and mitigation."[55] In spite of previously-held views on the absolute nature of the gender hierarchy and the rigidity of women's roles within the period, it is demonstrable that women were active members of the community, and that their behaviour in this respect was not only accepted, but expected. In this sense, "the ideology of the family does not mirror the actuality of family life."[56]

Far from entirely stifling their agency, it was often through marriage and the role of wife that many Stuart women exercised political agency. Especially among elite women, marriage offered a path into the political realm. As Edward Shils has stressed, "society has a centre. There is a central zone in the structure of society," and "membership in the society…is constituted by relationship to this central zone."[57] The political centre of early Stuart society was the court of the King, and the ultimate manifestation of political, social, cultural, and religious authority was the office of the monarch. Because of this reality, issues of access to the monarch were of central importance. Through marriage to court officials, Jacobean women came into the orbit of this central social zone and could engage in a range of behaviours and roles associated with it. Until recently, profound and meaningful political activity was believed to have been restricted to the "high" institutions of Parliament and the Privy Council, while political activity in the wider and less easily-definable institution of the royal court has been perceived as inferior and less effective. Expansions on traditional views of the court have coincided with and supported new views on the political roles of women in the period. By giving weight to

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[54] Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 42.
[55] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination*, p. 191.
[56] Jonathan Goldberg, "Fatherly Authority: The Politics of Stuart Family Images," in Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers, eds., *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 8.
[57] Shils, *Centre and Periphery*, p. 3.

the "informal channels of power in order to understand the political process" in the period, it is possible to form an interpretation of political power and its exercise that encompasses and acknowledges the prominent role played by women.[58]

In the early modern period, the court of the monarch was the centre of political activity. It was from this central region that all other manifestations of power radiated, "beyond the institutions of government – the monarchy, parliaments, courts of law – as sources of power and places where it was exercised, was the court."[59] Influential work by historians has argued for a historiographical stance that situates the court as the most important institution of Tudor and Jacobean England and not as of less importance than Parliament and the Privy Council as earlier historians has argued. Other, more traditionally-minded, historians viewed the court as a "private" institution and located politics and all significant forms of political activity in the "public" institutions of the Privy Council, Parliament and the law courts. More recent discussions of the court have, however, moved aside from this traditional dichotomy of public/private and adopted a more flexible view that situates the "court as the centre of politics."[60] This expansion of the view of the court has entailed that historians acknowledge the roles that elite women performed within this setting as they engaged in patronage and sponsorship activities and court intrigues with as much regularity as male courtiers did.

Political power in the period was not a monolithic and uniform entity; power never is. It flowed through an array of channels ranging from the institutionalized and official, to more informal and flexible avenues. The court (and the symbols and rituals of power enacted within it) was a porous entity and this allowed women to appropriate and redefine roles within its structure that were traditionally reserved for male actors. While women were unquestionably excluded from formal positions of political influence such as ministerial posts, they did have access to political authority in its many informal guises.[61] Thus, apart from the polemical literature of the period, "primary material indicates that although aristocratic women rarely came to the forefront of politics they

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[58] Harris, "Women and Politics," p. 281. Another work that rigorously displays this is Kostelyk's *'Household.'*
[59] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 345.
[60] Natalie Mears, "Courts, Courtiers, and Culture in Tudor England," *The Historical Journal*, 46 (2003), p. 704. Mears provides an excellent historiographical overview of interpretations of the court as a political entity in the period.
[61] In a discussion of women and politics, it is useful to keep in mind Merry Wiesner's notion that a distinction can be drawn between political power (the ability to shape political events) and political authority (political power that is formally recognized and legitimated). See Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, p. 289.

could nevertheless exercise considerable influence."[62] Through these informal networks of power elite women had the capacity to act as political agents.[63] "Though women did not have the central political role assumed by men, they could be active in politics and their actions were often integral to policy-making and governance at the centre and in the localities."[64]

As the political and cultural centre of the realm, the court, as with all centres, was not "as such, a spatially located phenomenon."[65] Rather, as most definitions of the court acknowledge, it was both a physical space and a political arena that was not dependent on spatial boundaries. It was a more loosely defined institution, and courtiers had the capacity to move relatively fluidly within its sphere. Hence, there was an increased potential for women to operate as political agents within the court structure. While "historians usually talk about patrons, brokers and suitors as if they were all male," this was, in actuality, far from the truth of the situation.[66] In order to understand the political role played by female courtiers in the period, it is essential to see that the boundaries between public and private as we define them now were either nonexistent or exceptionally permeable and fluid. Elite women and queens consort,

> moved unselfconsciously into the world of politics as they fulfilled their responsibilities as wives, mothers, and widows; when they did so, they engaged with surprising frequency in activities that even the dichotomies of contemporary social paradigms would recognize as political and public.[67]

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[62] Ruth Grant, "Politicking Jacobean Women: Lady Fernichirst, the Countess of Arran and the Countess of Huntly, c. 1580-1603," in Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen M. Meikle, eds., *Women in Scotland, c. 1100-1750* (Phantassie: Tuckwell Press, 1999), p. 95.
[63] For a definition and discussion of agency in a sociological sense, see Overing and Rapport, *Social and Cultural Anthropology*, pp. 1-9, where agency is defined primarily as "the capability, the power to be the source and originator of acts; agents are the subjects of action," p. 1.
[64] Mears, "Courts, Courtiers, and Culture," pp. 717-718.
[65] Shils, *Centre and Periphery*, p. 3.
[66] Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 68.
[67] Harris, "Women and Politics," p. 260.

Chapter 1: Performative Behaviour and the Roles of a Queen Consort

Recent work has drawn attention to the political roles performed by aristocratic women at the Jacobean court and perhaps the most illustrative of these examine the patronage activities of these female courtiers. In the period, "issues of access to, and intimacy with, the monarch were crucial."[1] As this statement implies, perhaps the aristocratic woman best suited to manipulate the informal patronage networks and other avenues of access to the monarch, was the queen consort. "Marriage to a prominent political figure was a way of participating in the political nation in a way which was denied to the wives of other men. Women were important purveyors of both patronage and influence by their marriages."[2] Barbara Harris has analysed the influential social roles occupied by the wives of powerful courtiers, roles that, in their performance, entailed that these women act as courtiers themselves. "Wifehood constituted a career that incorporated reproductive, managerial, political, and social functions essential to the survival and prosperity of their husbands' patrilineages."[3] The role of a wife carried with it the potentiality of social and political prominence and the same is true of the most hierarchically-advantaged wives – queens consort. The role of a queen consort was essentially that of an aristocratic wife writ large, carrying with it many of the same expectations and advantages. It also carried with it an enlarged possibility for political action.

Contemporary writing insisted that the queen was subject to her husband, just as all subjects were under the domination of the king and all women were subject to their husbands, yet queens consort were particularly well situated, in fact, to engage in political activities. "Even as they insisted that the queen was subject to her husband, rituals of queenship acknowledged that she enjoyed power, however informal or unofficial."[4] While most elite women had the capability to act as political agents at the Jacobean court, the queen consort was placed in a unique position. She "challenged the male social order with the paradox of a woman established in an intimate relationship to the public authority of the husband who embodied the forces of the social order: as his bedfellow

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[1] Mears, "Courts, Courtiers, and Culture," p. 722.
[2] Laurence, *Women in England*, p. 248.
[3] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, p. 61.
[4] John Carmi Parsons, "Ritual and Symbol in English Medieval Queenship to 1500," in Louise Olga Fradenburg, ed., *Women and Sovereignty: Cosmos, the Yearbook of the Traditional Cosmology Society*, vol. 7 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), p. 69

and ideally mother of the future king, she could wield manipulative influence to great effect."[5] Through the establishment of independent households and courts that were detached from those of the king, the establishments of queens consort represented "a political web from which patronage connections radiated."[6] A recent study has noted that,

> studying medieval queenship is salutary, because it requires an inclusive definition of power, one in which the social encompasses the political: it requires attention to gender division but also to the complementarity of women's agency and men's, to informal as well as formal action, to the pursuit of ends that are both personal and political, and always, to social context.[7]

The same can also be said of the study of queens consort during the early modern period.

Examining the careers (the term "careers" is used here to indicate a set of activities that both forms the centre of one's social life and is a defining factor of one's place in society) of queens consort in the early modern period can provide a point of entry for analyzing and understanding the political and cultural importance of elite women in general. While queens consort were excluded from formal political power, as were all elite women, they exercised a considerable level of influence on an informal level. Hence,

> Overwhelming evidence exists that they [women] participated with enthusiasm, persistence, and success in all the activities connected to forming, maintaining, and exploiting patronage networks. What lay behind this phenomenon was the fact that the world of kinship, the great household, client/patron relations, and the court conflated concerns that we would label as either personal or political and virtually ignored the distinction between the public and the private.[8]

Just as male courtiers did, they deftly availed themselves of the highly-effective and politically-charged systems of the court and patronage and kinship networks, as well as ritual and spectacle, to advance their own agendas and realize their own political goals.[9] "The activities of women with offices in the royal household constituted careers in the fullest sense of the word and their participation and presence were essential for the court

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[6] Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption*, p. 70.
[7] Janet L. Nelson, "Medieval Queenship," in Linda E. Mitchell, ed., *Women in Medieval Western European Culture* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), p. 179.
[8] Harris, "Women and Politics," p. 260.
[9] For an insightful discussion of the operation of patronage networks and their fluidity and accessibility to women in the period, see Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption*.

to perform its central social, ceremonial, political, and diplomatic functions," and the same can be said of queens consort.[10] These women deftly negotiated their social position and the limits placed upon their agency by the patriarchal value system which they inhabited in order to advance their own goals and agendas. These goals often centred on familial politics and reflected the range of personal commitments that these women had to their close friends and relations.

In this sense, "the familial context in which queens operated,"[11] must be recognized, especially when one acknowledges that "the king's wife could be a pivotal figure."[12] In their normative role as mothers to the king's children, queens consort were able to exert a great measure of influence. The childbearing success of a queen often translated into political capital. In many medieval and early modern European instances, a queen's childbearing ability translated directly into political control as they were invested with regency powers in the absence of the king and the minority of their offspring. This occurred in Scotland with Mary of Guise. In some instances, such as the case of Catherine d'Medici, a queen's powers extended even after the age of majority was reached by her children. Despite the misogynistic overtones of contemporary thought and literature, early modern English society had a vested belief in the ideal of companionate marriage and in the ideal of a wife serving as a wise and loyal helpmate to her partner.[13] This expectation was no different for queens and they were viewed, especially as they shared the mystique of majesty with their husbands, as faithful advisors to their husbands. "While the good queen, as a woman, must acknowledge her husband's authority, she was also qualified – and obliged – to give him good counsel."[14] While anxieties existed concerning the extent to which it was proper for a queen to influence her husband, queens, in general, were viewed as the other half of the king, sharing (to a degree) in their power and prestige. Thus, even if a queen was not successful as a breeder, she could still be viewed as playing a pivotal role alongside her spouse. Catherine of Aragon, whose career ultimately ended in tragedy, for a period exerted a large measure of influence over Henry VIII, such that he installed her as regent during his first expedition to make war in France. When Henry embarked for France on another

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[10] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, p. 211.
[11] John Carmi Parsons, "Family, Sex, and Power: The Rhythms of Medieval Queenship," in Parsons, ed., *Medieval Queenship*, p. 2.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[13] See Wrightson, *English Society*, pp. 89-118.
[14] Nelson, "Medieval Queenship," p. 193.

mission of conquest near the end of his reign, his last wife, Katherine Parr, played a role on the council of regency that he established in his absence, even though she herself had been unable to conceive during her career as Henry's wife.[15]

Far from being marginalized, as many traditional interpretations imply, queens consort, in particular, and elite women in general, played vital roles within the early modern political community. "Plainly, some women did influence their male relations and used their position to involve themselves in political affairs," and queens consort serve as an excellent illustration of this reality.[16] Queens occupied a unique social position, one that emphasized both their submissiveness to their husbands while simultaneously investing them with power and authority as important members of the monarchy. Just like the king, queens consort can be seen to have been possessed of two bodies as well.[17] On the one hand they were mortal women, fulfilling their societal obligations as wives and mothers, while on the other, they were divinely-appointed to elevated positions and were the holders of a complex institutionalized office that was invested with an intangible sense of regality and majesty.[18] Often belonging to prominent European royal houses, with powerful relations, queens consort functioned in the period as notable political figures, who exercised influence through their household establishments, their prominent positions as matriarchs of dynasties and mother to heirs, and their cultural patronage. In the period, "royal mothers, royal wives, and even royal sisters often played significant roles, made possible by the very state of the royalty," and a study of the politics of the court must be sensitive to this reality.[19] Aside from the importance of their roles as mothers, queens consort also exerted influence in other areas. It was generally expected of a queen consort that she would act as an intermediary. They were often the recipients of supplications on the parts of others in the hope that they would intercede with the king. In this respect, the queen consort was at an apex of the

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[15] As Katherine conceived and bore a child, despite her own death of puerperal fever shortly after the birth, to her fourth and last husband (Thomas Seymour, whom she married shortly after Henry's passing), it seems likely that the fact that she did not conceive an heir for Henry is attributable to his advanced age and increasingly debilitating health problems during the last years of his life.

[16] Laurence, *Women in England*, p. 251.

[17] The concept is detailed in Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957). Marie Axton analysed the concept as it was utilized by Elizabethan dramatists in relation to Elizabeth I but did not apply it to queens consort. See Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).

[18] Nelson, "Medieval Queenship," pp. 204-207.

[19] Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England: A Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p. 6.

patronage system in the period. As the wife of the king, the mother of a future king, and, often, the daughter and/or sister of other kings, queens consort had a share in the "inherent sacredness of sovereign power."[20] They had prominent roles to play in the complexities of the theatre state (to borrow Geertz's terminology) that characterized early modern monarchical kingdoms. Geertz has written that "the seat of the king was the axis of the world" in traditional Balinese society and this was equally true of England in the seventeenth century.[21] Queens had key symbolic roles to enact at the courts of their husbands and this invested them with a measure of political influence that should not be underestimated. Through patronage activities, participation in the complex system of symbolic exchange that characterized the period, childbearing, and the commonly-held perception of the queen as companion and help-mate to the king, queens consort were able to engage in political action. Pomp, pageantry, splendour and spectacle were an "integral part of the political process and the structure of power," and they were arenas of political expression to which women were fully integrated.[22] The king was the centre of the early modern state, a divinely instituted representative of God on earth, and, though "it might seem that the prince alone was endowed with this incomprehensibility, as God's sole earthly representative," in fact "the concept extended to the governing class," of which queens consort were members.[23] The early modern court was "governed by a rhetorical imperative of performance," all designed to reflect and transmit symbolically the values and attitudes of the central value system that governed the state, and queens consort had an important role to play in these performances.[24]

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[20] Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. 123.
[21] Geertz, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 109.
[22] David Cannadine, "Introduction: Divine Rites of Kings," in David Cannadine and Simon Price, eds., *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1987), p. 12.
[23] Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 66.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Chapter 2: Queen Anna of Denmark and the Historians

It is lamentable that "until recently, scholarship on women like Queen Anna of Denmark has been hampered by a common scholarly belief in the political sterility of queens consort generally."[1] This study seeks to address this lack in existing scholarship and to provide an analysis of the political power wielded by aristocratic women at the early modern English court through a study of "the reality of queenly power as embodied in Anna of Denmark."[2] While most historians, until recently, have treated Anna dismissively, as an utterly marginalized figure and a political non-entity, I seek to show that Anna was an important political figure at the early Jacobean court, one whose activities are worthy of analysis, especially because they can tell us much about the roles of other queens consort and of aristocratic women. My ambition is to move aside from "the assumption that Anna, being a negligible influence on court culture, is therefore not an appropriate subject for serious scholarly investigation," and will provide an analysis of the political and cultural achievements of "James's much neglected queen consort."[3] Far from being confined entirely to the periphery as a person of no lasting significance to the political and cultural landscape of the Jacobean court, Anna was a skilled social performer and a key player in the court politics of the period.

The historiography surrounding Anna of Denmark has been, until recently, quite grim.[4] Works on James I and the Jacobean court have shown a remarkable tendency to treat Anna with the utmost disdain. These works are dismissive of her influence and contributions to the court culture of the period and typically offer slighting remarks regarding her character and personality. There has been "a strongly-entrenched scholarly tradition of Anna as shallow, vain, and addicted to ludicrously frivolous activities."[5] This is not the forum for an exhaustive review of the negative attention that has been paid to Anna by historians, but is necessary to offer a brief historiographical commentary on the

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[1] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 29.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[3] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 2.
[4] Throughout this work, despite the usual tendency of most commentators, James's queen will be referred to as "Anna of Denmark" and not as "Anne of Denmark." This stems from the queen's own preference to sign her name in the Danish form of "Anna," and it was the form given when she swore her oath of office during her investiture as Queen of Scotland in 1590. However, in primary documents contemporaries referred to her as both "Anna" and "Anne" and later commentators have usually opted for the Anglicized "Anne" when speaking of her. For more on this topic and the argument for the use of "Anna," see Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 173, n. 1. Further discussion can also be found in Agnes Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England From the Norman Conquest* (Philadelphia: George Barrie and Sons, 1902 [1848]), vol. IX, p. 41.
[5] Leeds Barroll, "Theatre as Text: The Case of Queen Anna and the Jacobean Court Masque," *The Elizabethan Theatre*, 14 (1991), pp. 178-179.

manner in which most scholars have chosen to interpret her life. In his seminal biography on James VI and I, David Harris Willson set the basic tone which many later historians were to adopt when it came to discussions of James's consort Anna. Willson described Anna as "incurably frivolous and empty-headed," she was "shallow and vacuous," and "her love for gaiety and dancing, for games, masques and pageants, was childish rather than courtly."[6] Willson goes to on to remark despairingly, "alas! The King had married a stupid wife."[7]

Most commentators have been silent regarding Anna's political activities during her reign, yet most have credited her for her involvement in artistic patronage in the form of lavish court masques that she both commissioned and performed in (of which more will be said later). Willson not only denies her political involvements or attributes them to the machinations of others, such as when he states "courtiers did not scruple to draw her into the plottings of Scottish politics"[8] (implying that Anna was utterly ignorant of the politics of the Scottish court), but he also relegates her cultural activities to childish examples of royal indulgence. This builds upon earlier studies, which have typically tended to portray Anna as a biological woman housing the psyche of a child. Agnes Strickland, the Victorian chronicler of England's queens, writes in her assessment of Anna that "the queen retained her girlish petulance after she had been for years a matron."[9]

Later scholars have followed Willson's core interpretation of Anna and have either been openly critical of her or have ignored her and her political and cultural influence at the Jacobean court almost entirely. A modern commentator on Scottish history stated "the largely anonymous figure of Anne, who…made very little impact on the very masculine Scottish court, seems out of place in the line of tough-minded spouses of Stewart kings in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries."[10] Other studies concurred that "the queen's influence on the court is hard to detect,"[11] while Anna is described as

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[6] David Harris Willson, *King James VI and I* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), p. 94.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, p. 144.
[10] Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico, 1991), p. 233.
[11] Maurice Lee, Jr., *Great Britain's Solomon: James VI and I in his Three Kingdoms* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), p. 142.

enjoying "infantile amusements" and "childish pleasures."[12] Commentators appear to share the belief that "left to herself, Anne preferred to immerse herself in frivolity rather than in the cold realities of courtly politics."[13] Anna is usually depicted as a complete failure in life. She was a disappointment to her husband, a non-entity at court, and little more than an idiotic fool with no political, cultural or intellectual ambitions. One historian bluntly noted that "James was probably disappointed in his family life. His queen…was a stupid woman, clearly not a suitable bride for a man of James's intellectual tastes."[14] Many previous historians have often operated on the assumption that Anna, quite apart from the evidence (which will be discussed later), was a fool whose intellectual capacities amounted to little more than a "placid stupidity."[15] Hence, Maurice Ashley states that "beautiful and innocent she may have been; but she was frivolous, empty-headed, volatile and extravagant, and ill-matched to the Scottish Solomon with his swift intelligence and devotion to learning."[16] Even one of Anna's first positive biographers, Ethel Carleton Williams, while praising her character and noting her intellectual abilities, was reluctant to argue that she was politically active.[17]

The majority of commentators on Queen Anna have advanced two explanations for her supposed lack of political agency, both of which revolved around the assumption of her lack of intelligence. According to one of these interpretations, Anna was manipulated by politically-savvy male courtiers into factional struggles that did not even concern her in the slightest. In this view, Anna is utterly lacking in agency and, left to her own devices, would have "deliberately avoided politics," and given herself over entirely to her pursuit of pleasure.[18] In the second interpretation, Anna is depicted as a petty, foolish woman who had an inclination to act as a political agent but was quashed by wise courtiers and ministers who recognized that she was simply too stupid to play a political role. Thus, while Anna had an "unexpected taste for political intrigue," she also had,

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[12] Anne Somerset, *Ladies in Waiting: From the Tudors to the Present Day* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), p. 106.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] Alan G.R. Smith, "Introduction," in Alan G.R. Smith, ed., *The Reign of James VI and I* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 3.
[15] William McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom: The Reign of James I and VI* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958), p. 123.
[16] Maurice Ashley, *The Stuarts in Love, With Some Reflections on Love and Marriage in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963), p. 103.
[17] Ethel Carleton Williams, *Anne of Denmark: Wife of James VI of Scotland, James I of England* (London: Longman, 1970).
[18] Roy Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales, and England's Lost Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), p. 16.

"strong prejudices, no scruples, and very little intelligence, and the more remote she was kept from politics the better."[19] It was "necessary to exclude her as much as possible from politics."[20] These views paint a picture of either a simpleton lacking the mental capacity to be involved in the political culture which surrounded her or of a woman with the desire to be an agent, astutely and actively barred from acting as one on account of her idiocy. In either version, Anna was a dullard. These types of judgments have been long unchallenged and, in line with more recent assessments of Anna's career, this study aims to illustrate that Anna's activities "do not bear out traditional characterizations."[21]

In his analysis of the historiographical treatment meted out to Anna, David Bergeron posits an intriguing hypothesis. In his essay, "Masculine Interpretation of Queen Anna, Wife of James I,"[22] Bergeron writes of three themes that

> permeate much twentieth century historical analysis on this subject: Anna was impulsive, frivolous, and insignificant. I suggest that these terms create an image of Anne that derives from a masculine-based ideology; that is, historians seldom use the terms to characterize males who occupy prominent positions.[23]

Bergeron traces this trend to the professionalization of history in the Victorian age and notes that "male historians still voice very much the same attitudes to Anne," as their counterparts from the nineteenth-century.[24] Bergeron views this masculine bias as an exercise in stereotyping that created a popular perception of Anna quite apart from the truth of her character as it emerges from seventeenth-century sources, where Anna is depicted as "intelligent, vivacious, full of spunk," and "knowledgeable about politics."[25] Commending recent scholars, Bergeron urges that "perhaps the time has come to release Queen Anne from the 'perpetual death' of masculine bias."[26] Recently, due to the spirited suggestions of Bergeron and others, this rather dismal view of Anna of Denmark has begun to be transformed. Thus, "recent scholarship has corrected shop-worn notions of Anna as flighty, and has shown that Anne and the important members of her court

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[19] McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom*, p. 79.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[21] Leeds Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," in Linda Levy Peck, ed., *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 192.
[22] This essay can be found in David M. Bergeron, *Practicing Renaissance Scholarship: Plays, Pageants, Patrons, and Politics* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2000), pp. 87-100.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 99.
[26] *Ibid.*

actively cultivated political and artistic influence."[27] Notable recent work has done much to correct the "scholarly belittling of Anna" that had previously been the norm.[28] It is no longer possible for scholars to adhere to the notion that she was "the frivolous lightweight of the usual historians' portrait."[29]

This reversal of fortune started when historians began to adopt anthropological notions that stressed the importance of ritual and symbolism as forms of politics based on the principle that "the continued separation of seventeenth-century culture from politics will only impoverish understanding of both."[30] Acknowledging that these features of culture have political ramifications has opened the door for new understandings of the court masques (for which Anna was once so ridiculed) as forms of political expression. Once one accepts the political implications of court entertainments, it becomes extremely difficult to deny that Anna played any sort of political role, owing to her enthusiastic patronage of masque authors and her performance in many of the early masques. Rather than being displays of frivolity, the Queen's court masques were concerned with symbolic political manoeuvre and conflict resolution. This aspect of Anna's political role has been focussed on by many scholars seeking to provide a re-interpretation of her role at court and, due to its great importance, more will be said later of this. However, Anna's political involvements were not limited to her participation in masques. Throughout her career as queen consort, both in England and in Scotland, Anna was engaged in a myriad of political activities, both through cultural involvement and in the more traditional forms of factional politics and patronage. As the recent entry on Anna in the *Dictionary of National Biography* has noted, "much modern literary scholarship has overemphasized the queen's role in promoting and performing court masques. This approach obscures the true extent of her other cultural, intellectual, and political interests."[31] While offering a discussion of Anna's cultural achievements and their political importance, I also want to

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[27] Curtis Perry, *The Making of Jacobean Culture: James I and the Renegotiation of Elizabethan Literary Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 166.
[28] Barroll, "Theatre as Text," p. 178, n. 8.
[29] Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, p. 16. As a side note, it is rather interesting to point out that, in the historiographical survey I performed on this topic, the term most frequently used to describe Anna (appearing in almost every account, both positive and critical of her) was "frivolous."
[30] R. Malcolm Smuts, *Culture and Power in England, 1585-1685* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), p. 2. Smuts offers an insightful discussion of the need to develop a synthesis between politics and culture in the period based on an approach that is both interdisciplinary and theoretically informed on pp. 1-40.
[31] Maureen M. Meikle and Helen Payne, "Anne of Denmark," *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 198.

centre on the idea that, aside from her artistic patronage, Anna was also involved with more overtly political intrigues and activities at the highest level.

In most studies of Anna of Denmark, the reality of the power and authority invested in the person of the queen consort is often overlooked because it does not mesh with traditional interpretations that characterize Anna as lacking in intelligence and any degree of political acumen. Hence, "her important role as queen consort and royal mother has often been overlooked in favour of trivial issues such as her love of jewellery and dancing."[32] Yet, during the period, the role of queen consort was one of great magnitude and the queen consort can be described as "paradoxically deriving her influence through the very institution of patriarchy that was in place to subjugate her, she was not merely a commoner or even merely a peer: she was royalty in several degrees"; she was, "in effect, a kind of super peer with excellent access to the monarch, holding the unofficial position analogous to that of a favourite."[33] Most importantly, she was, in Anna's case, the mother of the future king. Thus, "queens consort found greater political capital in their positions as mothers than in their roles as wives."[34] The fact that it was her blood which flowed through the body of the future king ensured that she was guaranteed at least a measure of political involvement, due to her possession of "symbolic capital as mother of the future monarch."[35] Shils has noted that "occupational role is an entitlement to deference," and Anna's role as wife to the king and mother to the heir to the throne ensured she was treated with a level of deference on the part of the courtiers that surrounded her.[36]

Anna of the Denmark was the first queen consort in Scotland since Mary of Guise prior to the death of James V in 1542 and she was the first queen consort in England since Henry VIII's last queen, Katherine Parr. Prior to James's accession, the English court had been a queen's court (those of Mary and Elizabeth) for fifty years, but there had been no joint king's court to complement them. Elizabeth had played the role of monarch; hence there was no queen's court, only a monarch's court. The succession of James to the English throne brought with it the re-formation of a queen consort's court

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[32] Maureen M. Meikle, "A Meddlesome Princess: Anna of Denmark and Scottish Court Politics, 1589-1603," in Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch, eds., *The Reign of James VI* (Phantassie: Tuckwell, 2000), p. 126.
[33] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 5.
[34] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 193.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 194.
[36] Shils, *Centre and Periphery*, p. 279.

and, despite the fact that the significance of this court has been "drastically underestimated" by most historians, it was a dynamic centre of political influence.[37] When James moved into his Southern kingdom, it ensured that "with the arrival in England of a queen as consort, but not as a monarch, opportunities for strictly female court access suddenly expanded, opening up a new royal sphere peculiar to noblewomen in general."[38] In England, Anna's court, distinct and separate from James's, was modelled on those of previous queens consort, particularly that of Catherine of Aragon, first wife of Henry VIII. Aside from being based on Catherine's court in an institutional sense, Anna also took her behavioural cues from her predecessor. Both Catherine's household establishment and her actions provided Anna with an identifiable pattern of behaviour to follow.[39] Shortly after James's accession, Anna's English jointure was settled and the papers pertaining to it indicate that it was exactly the same as that granted to Catherine of Aragon, although more extensive grants of land were issued and additional royal houses were granted to the new queen.[40] As a separate court, Anna's households and lands were under her direct control and authority. Thus, in an open letter issued by the King's court to the knights of Anna's household, it was made clear that, respecting Anna's household and jointure, James "hath enabled her with an absolute power to possess, use, and govern it, during her life, as also to make choice of her own council, servants, and officers, thereby the more to advance the honour and dignity of her state."[41]

The role of queen consort was an institutionalized position and, as with all social roles, it was associated with certain cultural expectations in terms of behaviours and personal characteristics. As a skilled social actor, fully attuned to the commonly-held role expectations of a queen consort, Anna of Denmark showed herself adept at performing her social role. During her lifetime, Anna was spoken of with praise and she was popular with her subjects. Her performance as queen consort was "molded and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it was

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[37] Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 192.
[38] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, pp. 39-40.
[39] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 49.
[40] A full listing of the palaces and lands granted to Anna can be found in Edmund Lodge's *Illustrations of British History, Biography, and Manners, in the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, and James I* (London: Gregg International Publishers, 1969 [1838]), vol. III, pp. 62-65, in the section that contains reproductions of the Cecil papers from 1603. A listing of the manor houses bestowed on the queen and a listing of her appointed household officers can be found in the same work, pp. 65-68, in the reproductions of the Talbot papers from 1603.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 69, reproduced from the Talbot papers of 1603.

presented," and was remarkably accomplished.[42] Anna successfully interpreted the background assumptions inherent in the role of queen consort and this enabled her to expertly perform her role. Because of her extensive understanding of the cultural expectations of a queen consort and her own abilities to perform with skill, Anna gained both social popularity and political capital with her subjects. "To embrace a role is to be embraced by it," and the skilful performer performs so well that their identity is their role itself.[43] It was through her role as queen consort and the upbringing associated with that role that Anna developed her most core personal characteristics and these were viewed by her contemporaries as the expected attributes of a queen. Goffman has stressed that actions and behaviours have meaning and social value because they occur in a culturally-shared framework that imbues them with meaning and significance.[44] These background assumptions "are the 'syntax' of everyday behaviour, without which the 'language' of behaviour is incomprehensible."[45] Inhabitants of the early modern period had a clear set of background assumptions and expectations when it came to the performance of the role of queen consort, and Anna consummately adhered to these expectations, as her popularity among her contemporaries indicates.

Later historians who do not, by definition, share this same level of understanding and background assumptions when it comes to queens consort have, consequently, seen elements of frivolity, idiocy and lack of dignity in Anna's actions, yet, to her contemporaries, she was doing exactly what was expected of her as a queen. She was displaying, to great effect, the symbolic authority and prestige of the monarchy and of elite society and was displaying herself as a figure of both political and material influence. During her tenure as queen consort, both of England and Scotland, she "engaged in startlingly vigorous political activity."[46] Anna's actions as queen consort occurred in a specific social context, and were designed to meet specific social expectations. Performances of social roles are orientated principally to an affirmation of respect for the dominant social order, and this is precisely what Anna's performances achieved.[47] Far from being derisively depicted as a social misfit who failed in her attempts at regality and political importance, Anna should be recognized as an expert

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[42] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, p. 35.
[43] Goffman, *Encounters*, p. 91.
[44] Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).
[45] Manning, *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology*, p. 78.
[46] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 9.
[47] Branaman, "Goffman's Social Theory," p. lxiv.

social actor. Goffman noted "people, unlike animals, can be quite conscious of the displays they employ and are able to perform many of them by design in contexts of their own choosing," and, primarily within the sphere of her court, Anna was doing exactly this, engaging in skilled role performances.[48] As queen consort, Anna demonstrated that she was both knowledgeable about the rules of performance associated with her role and about her own ability to manipulate those rules to achieve her own ends.[49]

Within the separate space of her court, Anna was guaranteed an "enabling symbolic space" for cultural and political agency.[50] Anna's court was a fully-developed and autonomous one. Indeed, whereas the households of previous queens consort had existed alongside those of their husbands and had often generated less political and cultural activity than the more dominant male courts, under Anna, the court of the queen consort matured into a fully separate institution. Anna first developed this independent court structure during her tenure as Queen of Scotland when she established an entirely autonomous court at Dunfermline and later expanded upon this idea while Queen of England, where she lived apart from James for most of the rest of her life. At her court, centred at Hampton Court, Oatlands, Somerset House (later known as Denmark House), and Greenwich Palace, Anna engaged in an array of political and cultural activities, from entertaining foreign ambassadors to staging the opulent masques for which she is best known. In her English court, as in her Scottish one, Anna strove to "assert a meaningful royalty into the role of queen consort."[51] The early modern court was a politically charged atmosphere and Anna utilized the importance of her court to advance her own political and cultural agenda.

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[48] Goffman, *Gender Advertisements: Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), p. 2.
[49] Manning, *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology*, p. 175.
[50] Clare McManus, "Introduction: The Queen's Court," in Clare McManus, ed., *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens* (New York: Palgrave, 2003), p. 3.
[51] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 115.

Chapter 3: "That Brave Princesse": The Life and Career of Anna of Denmark

Anna was born on 12 December 1574 at Skanderborg Castle in Jutland, Denmark. She was the second daughter of King Frederick II of Denmark and Norway and his wife Sophia.[1] Sophia was the daughter of Ulric III, Duke of Mecklenburg, whose court was regarded as one of the cultural centres of Northern Europe. Anna had six siblings, three brother and three sisters. Her younger brother, the first born son of Frederick and Sophia, eventually reigned in Denmark as Christian IV, while her other two brothers successively held the title of Duke of Schleswig-Holstein. Anna's sisters all made prominent marriages within other powerful Northern courts and Anna retained close relations with all of her siblings following her departure from her homeland on her marriage to James in 1589. She remained especially close to her brother Christian, who visited her twice in England, and to her mother, who survived her daughter's 1619 death until her own in 1631. In portraits of Anna, she is frequently represented wearing jewels in her hair or on her collar in the shape of a letter S (for Sophia) and C4 (representing Christian IV) as a testament to her pride in her heritage and family relations.

As was the custom at the Danish court, Anna spent her formative years in the care of her grandparents at their sophisticated court centred at Güstrow along with her elder sister Elisabeth and brother, Christian. During this period Anna was taught by an unknown Humanist tutor to write in an elegant italic hand and was educated in both her native Danish language and also in German, the language spoken at the royal court. During negotiations for her marriage to James, Anna also learned French in order to acquire a common language with James, and it was in this language that she exchanged letters with Elizabeth I of England after she arrived in Scotland.[2] While in Scotland she also learned Scots and English. During her tenure as Queen of England she employed an Italian tutor, John Florio, and contemporaries spoke of her as speaking Italian perfectly. While it cannot be proven, it seems likely that Anna was also competent in Latin as many of the writers that she was later to patronize addressed her in this tongue and portions of

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[1] Biographical information concerning Anna, unless otherwise noted, has come from Meikle and Payne, "Anne of Denmark," pp. 191-198, Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, and A.W. Ward, "Anne of Denmark," *Dictionary of National Biography* (1908), pp. 431-441.

[2] For samples of Anna's letters to Elizabeth in French, see Markham John Thorpe, ed., *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Scotland* (London: Longman, 1858), p. 577 and p. 661.

the masques which she performed in were also in Latin.[3] As Anna played a key role in all details of the masques in which she was a performer, it seems unlikely that she would have requested portions of the text to be in a language that was foreign to her. Likewise, alongside Danish and German, Latin was used extensively at the Danish court, as it was in most Renaissance kingdoms.[4] From her demonstrable skill with languages, it can be inferred that she "remained a skilled linguist throughout her life," despite the fact that "historians who depict her as a superficial queen have often overlooked this."[5] Indeed, until recently, most scholars have been inclined to propagate an image of the Northern court in which Anna was raised as a cultural backwater of sorts, one that compared dismally in terms of wealth and cultural opulence with other European courts such as those of France and England. In truth, this was far from the reality of Anna's upbringing. By the 1570s, Denmark was one of the wealthiest nations in Europe and had attained a level of aesthetic refinement to equal its riches. Denmark in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries was a politically powerful and financially successful nation. The Danish rulers had under their direct control the area that we now recognize as Denmark in addition to large portions of Sweden and all of Norway. Anna's personal coat of arms incorporated those of Denmark, Sweden and Norway and she prided herself on being both the daughter of a king and the sister to a king, in addition to being the wife and mother of kings.[6]

It was during her childhood that Anna was filled with the expansive appreciation and understanding of the arts that was to characterize her later life. Although historians have often been quick to dismiss this appreciation for cultural activities (such as art, architecture, music, pageantry, and the theatre) as foolish, frivolous, and childlike, Anna's love for these things would have been praised for its sophisticated nature during her own lifetime. Recent scholarship has challenged the notion that Anna emerged from an uneducated European cultural backwater and was little equipped intellectually to be

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[3] Alan Stewart, in *The Cradle King: The Life of James VI and I, the First Monarch of a United Great Britain* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003), p. 119, claims that Anna barely understood French, Scots or Latin, a claim which runs contrary to available evidence.

[4] Mara R. Wade, "The Queen's Courts: Anna of Denmark and Her Royal Sisters – Cultural Agency at Four Northern European Courts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in McManus, ed., *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens*, p. 56.

[5] Meikle and Payne, "Anne of Denmark," p. 191.

[6] A description of Anna's coat of arms is given in Francis Sandford, *A Genealogical History of the Kings and Queens of England and Monarchs of Great Britain, From the Conquest, Anno 1066 to the Year 1707* (London: Printed by M. Jenour, 1707 [STC 147935]), p. 554. This same work also provides the text of a tablature hung in Westminster Abbey to mark her grave which praises Anna's genealogy, p. 559.

anything other than a petty, gossiping girl with no ambition aside from birthing an heir and indulging her own foolish pleasures, and rightly so. Anna's "intelligence is usually the subject of a slighting comment, yet…she was a facile linguist, and she became a discerning patron of the arts."[7] When one considers the nature of her developmental years and the level of culture that she was exposed to during her childhood, it becomes apparent that her love of display, theatrics and pageantry did not suddenly emerge when she was confronted with the riches that her husband inherited in England, but was, rather, an aspect of her character that was ingrained in her from birth. By the time of her marriage to James, Anna already had "a clear grasp of the uses of display and ceremonial," which was one of the most central themes of Renaissance monarchies.[8]

Anna was not the only member of her family to display a passion for cultural and intellectual activities. Her mother Sophia was an intelligent, accomplished woman who had strong interests in chemistry, astronomy and other sciences and actively encouraged her husband to support the work of Tycho Brahe. Thus, "Anna had in her parents, especially in her mother, available role-models of some intellectual and political weight."[9] Likewise, Anna's three sisters, Elisabeth, Hedevig and Augusta, who all married into an array of German courts, were equally as involved in artistic patronage as Anna, and her brother Christian also earned a reputation for cultural sophistication during his reign as king of Denmark. In this, Anna and her siblings all reflected the fact that they came from a court that was "sophisticated, cosmopolitan, and even trend-setting."[10] Anna's sisters, following their marriages, all fashioned courts that were influential sites of culture and, when analyzing Anna's career, it is key to situate her within the context of her Danish upbringing and the effect that it was to have on all the members of her family.[11] When Anna is viewed alongside her siblings, she does not appear to be the abnormally stupid and frivolous woman that English historians have made her out to be. Hence, "it seems critical to determine the queen's educational and cultural training at

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[7] Caroline Bingham, *James VI of Scotland* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), p. 121.
[8] James Knowles, " 'To Enlight the Darksome Night, Pale Cinthia Doth Arise:' Anna of Denmark, Elizabeth I and the Images of Royalty," in McManus, ed., *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens*, p. 24.
[9] Leeds Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 193.
[10] Wade, "The Queen's Courts: Anna of Denmark and Her Royal Sisters," p. 51.
[11] This argument is elegantly and convincingly made in Wade, "The Queen's Courts: Anna of Denmark and Her Royal Sisters," pp. 49-80.

home in order to determine more fully and assess more precisely her activities at the new court[s]" of Scotland and England.[12]

In the early 1580s, negotiations for a Danish-Scots marriage alliance first began, but it was not until 1589 that it was finally solidified with the wedding of Anna and James VI of Scotland.[13] Initially, Anna's older sister Elisabeth was proposed as a match for James, but the negotiations were dragged out due to parallel French negotiations for a bride, domestic events in Scotland, the execution of James's mother Mary Queen of Scots in England, and the initial opposition of England's Elizabeth I (whom James, despite her actions regarding his mother, was studious to avoid angering). Originally, both Elizabeth and the Scottish Lord Chancellor, Sir John Maitland of Thirlestane, favoured a French match for James with Catherine of Navarre, the sister of the future French king Henry IV, even though the match with Denmark would resolve the contentious issue of the ownership of the Orkney Isles.[14] King Frederick grew understandably vexed as the Scots procrastinated when it came to the marriage negotiations, but allowed a Scottish embassy to enter Denmark to discuss the marriage to his daughter Elisabeth in 1588. However, Frederick unexpectedly died on April 4, 1588, and this, again, caused the negotiations to be postponed. Before the Scots could assemble another delegation to journey to Denmark, Elisabeth was engaged to the Duke of Brunswick. The Scottish government was disappointed that James could no longer wed the eldest daughter of the Danish house, but Anna's mother was eager for the match to proceed and volunteered Anna to the Scots as a replacement for Elisabeth.

In both Denmark and Scotland, the majority of the population favoured the Scottish-Danish alliance due to economic considerations. While Scotland had traditionally been paired with France in the 'Auld Alliance,' Denmark and Scotland were important trading partners and Denmark controlled many of the highly-trafficked Scottish

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

[13] For biographies of James and assessments of his rule as king of Scotland, the reader is referred to Willson, *King James VI and I*, Jenny Wormald, *Kirk, Court and Community: Scotland, 1470-1625* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981), Bingham, *James VI of Scotland*, Stewart, *The Cradle King*, Smith, ed., *The Reign of James VI and I*, W.B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom*, Lee, *Great Britain's Solomon*, Bryan Bevan, *King James VI of Scotland and I of England* (London: Rubicon Press, 1996), Godfrey Davies, "The Character of James VI and I," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 5 (1941), pp. 33-63, and Samuel R. Gardiner, *The History of England From the Accession of King James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1883).

[14] Negotiations for both the Danish and French matches began seriously in 1585, when James sent embassies to both nations on March 26. See Stewart, *The Cradle King*, p. 105.

merchant routes.[15] Likewise, Denmark was a Reformation nation, although Anna was raised as an orthodox Lutheran, as opposed to the Calvinist upbringing of James. Contemporaries well understood the political importance of the match, to the extent that, as one scholar has noted, allusions to it appeared in popular literature, where Anna was perhaps intended by Spenser as the model for the figure of Concord in his *Fairie Queen*, due to the alliance building power of the match.[16] There were also precedents for a Danish match, as the Scottish King James III had married a Danish princess Margaret. Finally, it was also the ages of the prospective brides that tipped the scales in Anna's favour. James was twenty three and Anna was a girl of fourteen, while Catherine of Navarre was a mature woman of thirty. The majority of the Scottish people supported the match and Elizabeth and Thirlestane were brought around to accepting it. Elizabeth eventually warmed to the marriage and set James a gift of money and a kind letter in which she stressed her devotion to and admiration of the Danish monarchy, writing of "the inward zele, wiche, sins my childhold, I haue borne to the parentes of your honourable queen, to whome I desiar all felicitie and neuer shal scrape from my memorye the intire loue the bare me."[17] In diplomatic terms, James's marriage to Anna was a success, bringing him "into close contact not only with her native land but with Northern German states whose princes were related or connected to Anne and her brother, Christian IV of Denmark."[18] The treaty that was negotiated for the marriage was beneficial for Scotland and, aside from other economic advantages, resulted in Denmark ceding the Orkney Isles to Scotland.

In personal terms, the marriage, though perhaps not an absolute success, was not the spectacular failure that many historians have alleged. Scholars have long-regarded James, with his penchant to surround himself with male favourites, as a practicing homosexual and have suggested that this led to a situation where Anna was marginalized and disregarded by her husband. Not content with discussing James's relations with his wife entirely in terms of his perceived homosexuality, some studies have labelled James a

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[15] For an analysis of Scottish-Danish economic and political relations, see Thomas Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot...Scottish-Danish Relations, c. 1450-1707* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1988) and David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1997), pp. 17-23.
[16] Cay Dollerup, "Spenser's Concord and the Danish Princess Anna," *Notes and Queries*, 230 (1985), pp. 23-25.
[17] September, 1589, in John Bruce, ed., *Letters of Queen Elizabeth and King James VI of Scotland* (London: The Camden Society, 1849), p. 56.
[18] Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, pp. 89-90.

virulent misogynist and argued that it was this aspect of his personality that rendered his marriage an utter disaster. Thus, J.W. Williamson notes that "Anne of Denmark was, of course, the indignant and frequently hysterical victim of the King's anti-female policy."[19] As Middaugh notes, "distracted perhaps by curiosity over the question of James's homosexuality, modern historians have found it easy to discount the Queen's relationship with her husband."[20] Yet, as recent studies of homosexuality have illustrated, a twentieth-century construct of what homosexuality is does not necessarily equate with seventeenth-century behaviour. Modern categories of explanation are not universal in time and place.[21] While James certainly formed strong attachments to several of his male courtiers, and definitely seems to have preferred the company of men to that of women, there is no evidence upon which to assert that he actually was a practicing homosexual in the manner in which inhabitants of our society understand the term.[22] Numerous historians have spoken of James as being undeniably homosexual, but, as many scholars in the developing field of queer studies acknowledge, homosexuality is a modern classification founded upon its binary position as the opposite of heterosexuality (an idea rooted in the belief that there are only two possible forms of sexuality) – a form of categorization that may not be applicable to early modern societies.[23] Likewise, our understanding of the types of behaviours and attitudes that characterize homosexuality may not be entirely compatible with the manner in which inhabitants of the early modern period conceived of male to male relations. In this sense, James's supposed attraction to men does not automatically entail that he also possess a deep seated aversion to women that would ensure that his wife was entirely excluded from his affections. Indeed, Anna was involved in James's relationships with his favourites, and James actually required her

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[19] J.W. Williamson, *The Myth of the Conqueror, Prince Henry Stuart: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Personation* (New York: AMS Press, 1978), p. 15.

[20] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 7. Interestingly, Caroline Bingham in *James VI of Scotland*, p. 125, suggests that James also had a female mistress during the 1590s, Anne Murray. I have come across no evidence to support this, however. Indeed, there exists no actual 'hard' evidence to suggest that James was unfaithful to Anna at all, whether with men or women.

[21] See T.G. Ashplant and Adrian Wilson, "Present-Centred History and the Problem of Historical Knowledge," *The Historical Journal*, 31 (1988), pp. 253-271. In discussing homosexuality in the period, many scholars have advanced a present-centred line of argument. The same is also true of many works set within a feminist frame, where the tendency is often to see in women's exercise of agency in past societies the beginnings of feminism as we understand it in the present day. See Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory*, 8 (1969), pp. 3-53.

[22] See Michael B. Young, *King James I and the History of Homosexuality* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

[23] See Jonathan Goldberg, *Sodometries: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

to give her formal approval before any of them could be elevated to positions of influence within his service.[24]

While historians have often tended to view James's sexual orientation as obviously homosexual, "contemporary allegations about James's homosexuality are surprisingly hard to come across."[25] This is likely because, "most of James's contemporaries did not see his behaviour towards his favourites as signifying a sexual relationship between them."[26] In a culture such as early modern England, where there were no truly private spaces and the subversion of traditional gender roles and expectations was met with communal derision, it is unlikely that James would have been able to have been a practicing homosexual without at least a portion of the English populace being aware of it. As Anthony Fletcher points out in his study of the gender system in early modern England, effeminacy was a serious character deficiency in the period and one that often resulted in public shaming rituals for those accused of it.[27] Since no such public concerns were raised during James's rule, it would be difficult to sustain the conclusion that his supposed homosexuality was obvious to all.[28] Sodomy was regarded with almost supernatural horror in the period and was perceived as a crime that was on equal footing with offences such as heresy, sorcery, and treason.[29] Indeed, James himself, in his instructional manual to his son, *Basilikon Doron*, enjoined his heir that, while he should be merciful in the execution of the law, there were certain crimes, such as treason, incest, sodomy, and witchcraft, which he was "bound never in conscience to forgive."[30] Sodomy was an offence against both natural and divine law and it is hard to accept that, had James truly been as rampantly homosexual (in the manner in which we conceive of the term) as some historians have described, there was not more of a public outcry.

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[24] See Neil Cuddy, "The Revival of the Entourage: The Bedchamber of James I, 1603-1625," in David Starkey ed., *The English Court: From the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London: Longman, 1987), p. 195.
[25] Robert Shephard, "Sexual Rumours in English Politics: The Cases of Elizabeth I and James I," in Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler, eds., *Desire and Discipline: Sex in Premodern Europe* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), p. 111. For an example of the usual stance which scholars have taken towards James's sexuality, see Jonathan Goldberg, "James I and the Theatre of Conscience," *English Literary History*, 46 (1979), p. 398, where Goldberg states that James was indisputably homosexual.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 113.
[27] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination*, pp. 322-346.
[28] This is not to state unequivocally that James was heterosexual, it is only to suggest that a comprehensive understanding of his sexuality must be dependent upon something more than the observation that he enjoyed the company of male favourites and should encompass a detailed examination of the cultural and social climate as it relates to gender and sexuality in the period. Likewise, while it is possible that James was sexually involved with men, that does not, in itself, negate the importance of the role played by Anna.
[29] Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: GMP Publishers, 1988), pp. 19-30.
[30] James I, *Basilikon Doron*, pp. 37-38.

Likewise, just as it is difficult to accept at face-value the assertion that James was homosexual, it is equally hard to accept the usual description of Anna and James's marriage as an entirely loveless union. Despite the fact that James preferred the company of his male friends to that of his wife and the likelihood that they ceased to cohabitate after 1607, it appears as though Anna and James had a reasonably successful marriage. After an initial flush of romance shortly after their marriage, the couple appear to have settled into a loving and companionate marriage, that, while perhaps not filled with passion (again, as inhabitants of the twenty first-century would comprehend the term) was a comfortable and caring one. James was always kind and considerate to his wife and treated her with respect and honour.[31] Even by twenty first-century standards, this was not a negligible basis for a good marriage.

A reading of James's letters to Anna show that he had some affection for her as he addresses her in warm terms and bestows loving nicknames upon her in his correspondence.[32] Anna reciprocated this affection and signed her frequent letters to her husband "so kissing your hands I rest, Anna R."[33] James also penned a number of poems to his wife throughout their marriage that illustrate that he bore a measure of love towards her.[34] As the pair advanced in years they appear to have willingly accepted that they shared divergent interests and acknowledged that each should be entitled to pursue their separate lives. But they interacted through frequent letters and always appeared as a loving family in public. Their affection for each other appears to have been genuine and they grew into a pattern of comfortable domesticity with each other. Anna and James maintained an affectionate correspondence with each other until her death and she addressed him in these letters as "Her Heart" and updated him on all the small goings-on of her daily life and her health.[35] In light of this, it is difficult to accept Barbara Lewalski's suggestion that Anna was "thoroughly marginalized in both the public and the

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[31] See Godfrey Davies, "The Character of James VI and I," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 5 (1941), pp. 33-63.
[32] For a sampling of James's letters to his wife, see Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI and I*.
[33] See P. Walker and A. MacDonald, eds., *Letters to King James the Sixth From the Queen, Prince Henry, Prince Charles, the Princess Elizabeth and her Husband Frederick King of Bohemia, and Their Son Prince Frederick Henry* (Edinburgh: The Maitland Club, 1835).
[34] See Allan F. Westcott, ed., *New Poems by James I of England from a Hitherto Unpublished Manuscript (Add. 24195) in the British Museum* (New York: AMS Press, 1966).
[35] A prime example of one of these notes can be seen in S.C. Lomas, ed., *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Bath Preserved at Longleat, Wiltshire* (Dublin: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1907), vol. II, pp. 57-58.

personal sphere by James's ideology of patriarchal rule and his emotional ties to a series of homosexual favourites."[36]

In June of 1589 a delegation headed by George Keith, fifth Earl Marischal (and James's proxy) left Scotland and journeyed to the Danish royal court where the proxy marriage between Anna and James was celebrated on August 20 in the great hall of Kronborg Castle. Anna, her trousseau and entourage later set sail for Scotland on September 5, 1589. However, the usually short and simple voyage between Scotland and Denmark was a nightmare of bad weather and Anna's flotilla was forced to seek refuge in Southern Norway. Due to the bad weather, communications were strained between Denmark and Scotland, and James, in a once-in-a-lifetime flurry of passion, decided (quite against the will of his council) to gallantly brave the storms and journey to collect his bride, departing near the end of October. An interesting side note to this episode is that James believed the foul weather that hindered Anna's voyage to be caused by a group of Scottish witches. When James and his bride returned to Scotland, the suspected weird sisters were rounded up and prosecuted in the North Berwick trials of 1590-1591. This represented the first major Scottish witch hunt, in which at least seventy suspected witches were arrested and tortured, resulting in an unknown, but certainly large, number of executions.[37] James arrived at Upslo (modern day Oslo) and met his bride for the first time on November 19, 1589 at the Bishop of Upslo's palace of Akershus, where she was waiting out the hostile weather. It was here, on November 23, that Anna and James were joined together in a church marriage in addition to the civil one that Anna had undergone with James's proxy. The weather remained intemperate over the coming weeks and Anna and James postponed their journey to Scotland. They travelled together through Danish territory and arrived at Kronborg Castle in January of 1590 where they stayed for several months on a sort of extended honeymoon. James seemed to greatly enjoy his time in Denmark, feasting with Anna's family and visiting Copenhagen, Roskilde,

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[36] Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, p. 4.

[37] James's belief (and personal interest) in witchcraft is often commented upon by historians and, while it is true that during his Scottish reign he approached such cases of the supernatural with very little skepticism, as his English reign progressed he showed himself increasingly reluctant to accept allegations of witchcraft at face value and usually ordered further investigation into such charges. Often the end result was a verdict of innocence. For more on this topic, see James Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996) and Sharpe, *The Bewitching of Anne Gunter: A Horrible and True Story of Deception, Witchcraft, Murder, and the King of England* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

Frederiksborg, and Tycho Brahe at his observatory on the island of Hven.[38] The couple remained in Denmark until the wedding of James's originally intended bride Elisabeth, on April 19, 1589. Finally, on April 21, James and Anna set out for Scotland and, after an uneventful and smooth journey, they arrived at Leith on May 1, 1590.

Despite the fact that Anna's arrival had long been anticipated, the nation was ill-prepared for her reception, yet it managed to give her an impressive welcome. It was necessary for Anna to stay at Leith for a short period while the palace of Holyroodhouse was made ready for her and she began the journey to that destination on May 6. Her coronation was conducted in Holyrood Abbey on May 17, 1590 and was attended by the majority of the Scottish ruling class, an array of representatives of the Danish government (who had journeyed with Anna from Denmark and stayed in Scotland until after her crowning) and envoys sent by Elizabeth I. While the Scottish Kirk had lobbied for a ceremony that would be stripped of the traditional anointing, which would have robbed it of much of its sacred overtones, the service was conducted according to the established practice. Anna's Scottish coronation was the first symbolically political act that she was involved with in Britain and, as a powerfully emblematic ceremony; it projected to the attendant audience that "she now ruled with James."[39] The coronation was a direct acknowledgement of Anna's official position as Queen of Scots and a public declaration of her elevation, with divine approval, to the level of sacral kingship. With the anointing portion of the ritual still performed, Anna was invested with a degree of regality that was shared only by her husband and bordered on the semi-divine.[40]

Despite the objections of the Calvinist Kirk to aspects of her coronation, Anna enjoyed popularity in Scotland from the moment of her arrival. As queen consort, Anna showed herself to be skilled at managing her public performances and involvements and this ensured that she "was an instant success in Scotland; her attractiveness and kind

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[38] For a full account of the marriage (both civil and religious) and the couple's time in Denmark, see Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*.

[39] David M. Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers: King James of England and Scotland* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), p. 53.

[40] For a full account of Anna's coronation, see D.D. Cooper, *Four Scottish Coronations: Special Issue of the Transactions of the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society and of the Glasgow Ecclesiological Society* (Aberdeen: The Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society and the Glasgow Ecclesiological Society, 1902), pp. 19-24 and Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp. 100-107. Cooper's earlier work asserts that Anna was not, in fact, anointed, while Stevenson (who bases his account of eyewitness accounts produced by both Scots and Danish participants) states that she was anointed by Robert Bruce. The second interpretation is the one best supported by the available evidence and the one that most other scholars have tended to adhere to. On the sacred power of the anointment, see Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*.

manner endeared her immediately to the people."[41] Anna's childhood in Denmark, with its cultivation of symbolic display, left her with a deep understanding of the value of ceremony and the ability to deploy that understanding. Her husband, however, did not possess so clear a comprehension of the benefits of symbolic representation and cultural output, so Anna's displays were viewed by most (staunch religious reformers not included) as restoring to the state much of its regal splendour which had not been seen since the early period of Mary Stuart's rule. Thus, as one recent scholar has commented, "Queen Anne understood the functions of pleasing the public, but James's concept of public regality was different," and centred mostly on private displays in front of select courtiers, as opposed to ritual theatre that showcased the monarchy to wider segments of the population.[42] Immediately following her coronation, Anna made her state entry into Edinburgh (also a deeply symbolic series of ceremonies). During the procession, Anna's Danish heritage and relations were praised and the Queen was addressed by the allegorical figures of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Virtue, was presented with gifts on behalf of the people, and listened as oaths were sworn to her by representatives of the Scottish populace. On this occasion, Anna displayed herself to the city's inhabitants as an elegant and attractive ruler, full of graciousness and kindness towards her new subjects.[43] In this, as in her other public performances, Anna showed herself to the people as "more affable than her husband," encouraging their warm reception of her.[44]

During her time in Scotland, however, Anna was to engage in more tangible political expressions than those facilitated through ritual display. "She became, with the passage of years, a shrewd judge of character and a discreet influence on the affairs of the court."[45] This is a facet of her life that recent scholars have exposed and elaborated upon. Available evidence from this period illustrates that Anna was actively involved in Scottish politics and showed herself to possess "a politically relentless streak."[46] Within two years of her arrival in Scotland she had thrown herself into factional politics at the court and was engaged in a campaign of aggression against her chief opponent and one of

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[41] Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers*, p. 52.
[42] Judith M. Richards, "The English Succession of James VI: 'National' Identity, Gender and the Personal Monarchy of England," *The English Historical Review*, 472 (2002), p. 522.
[43] An account of Anna's official entry into Edinburgh, based on eyewitness accounts, is available in Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, pp. 107-120.
[44] Willson, *King James VI and I*, p. 166.
[45] Bingham, *James VI of Scotland*, p. 121.
[46] Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 197.

the top political figures at James's court, the Chancellor, John Maitland, Lord Thirlestane. Anna's animosity towards Maitland likely first emerged due to her knowledge that he had opposed James's marriage to her almost up to the moment of their union. She was aware that his opposition had prolonged the negotiations and caused the union to be postponed over a period of many months. Further tensions between the two arose when Maitland's wife, Dame Jean Fleming, was overheard making indiscreet statements about Anna within the Queen's own chamber. As Anna was a woman who was intensely conscious of her own honourable lineage and position, such comments were enough to earn her long-enduring enmity. Anna, throughout her life, presented herself as a woman justifiably proud of her regality. As her motto she selected the Italian phrase *La Mia Grandezza Dal Eccelso* (my power comes from the most high) and made deliberate attempts throughout her life to remind those around her of her noble lineage. In an undated letter that she penned to James, she wrote of a perceived scorn that she felt had been dealt to her from an unnamed courtier. She urged James to punish the offender and wrote that "honore gois befor lyfe."[47] Indeed, in England her anger towards Thomas Overbury and Robert Carr was the result, primarily, of their failure to accord her the dignity and respect which she thought her rank entitled. The Venetian ambassador to England, Antonio Foscarini, noted in a dispatch to the Doge and the Venetian Senate in 1618, "she is daughter, sister and wife of a king, which cannot be said of any other. She claims that her greatness comes not from the King but from God alone and her motto runs, my power is from the most high."[48]

The situation between Anna and Maitland was made even worse due to a land dispute that the two were engaged in. Upon her marriage to James, Anna had been granted, as a part of her jointure, the land of Dunfermline. While the official documents presented to Anna at Oslo had excluded the area of Musselburgh, of which Maitland possessed the Lordship, Anna and her party now demanded that this be given to her as well. Maitland, however, refused to yield the lucrative territory and Anna launched into a protracted battle with the Chancellor to obtain the land. She also felt that the Chancellor's refusal indicated that he "held her queenship in light regard."[49] Ultimately,

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[47] Walker and MacDonald, eds., *Letters to King James the Sixth From the Queen*, reproduced facsimile number 5.
[48] Antonio Foscarini to the Doge and Senate in A.B. Hinds, ed., *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy* (London: Longman, 1947), vol. XV, 1618, pp. 392-393.
[49] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 19.

Anna was to gain the upper hand as, in March of 1592, James dismissed Maitland from the court. In 1593, Danish emissaries journeyed to the Scottish court to assist Anna in her struggle for Musselburgh and, in May, Maitland yielded a liferent to the Queen on the land.[50] Anna entered her new territory in July and secured her ownership by establishing a court there. Although Maitland was allowed to return to court in October of 1593 (and this was possibly only after Anna had sanctioned it), it was clear that Anna had emerged the victor in their squabble.[51] She tolerated the presence of the Chancellor in the future (and even allied herself to him in a later factional dispute), but made her distaste for his wife common knowledge and would show her no favour nor suffer to be in her presence. During the two-year conflict, James had made every attempt to reconcile his wife to his Chancellor and even Elizabeth I had become embroiled in the situation and written to Anna to try to persuade her to set aside her anger for the sake of the welfare of the Scottish nation. While some scholars have seen in this affair a petulant and foolish young woman throwing a tantrum, it is more likely that, "the interventions of both James and Queen Elizabeth suggest that they perceived here something more than the self-indulgent behaviour of a naïve young woman. What these monarchs had to contend with was a person capable of asserting herself forcefully with Maitland and other peers."[52] Anna's feud with Maitland was strategic and necessary, as opposed to merely discretionary. On one level, Anna's honour as Queen was called into question by Maitland's perceived impudence and this demanded an appropriate response from Anna. By challenging Maitland and gaining the upper hand, Anna also created space for her own initiatives by breaking his hegemony at the Scottish court among other courtiers and with James.

Another way in which Anna's actions had political impact in Scotland was through her choice of friends and allies. One of her earliest friendships in her new kingdom was with the chronically out-of-favour Earl of Bothwell. The Earl, against whose family James had a deep-seated animosity, was, without question, engaged in treasonous activities during the 1590s. James and his government were increasingly suspicious of the Earl, yet Anna clearly admired him and enjoyed his company; she refused to cease seeing him. In her refusal to curtail her relations with Bothwell, even in the face of

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[50] A liferent is a right entitling a person (called a "liferenter") to use and enjoy another's property for life. It could also entail that the recipient, as opposed to possessing the property, was paid an annual sum that was equivalent to the yearly income from that piece of land.

[51] Meikle, "A Meddlesome Princess," p. 132.

[52] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 19. See also Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," pp. 195-196.

popular allegations that they were lovers, Anna displayed the two traits that drove much of her political activities, "persistence and personal loyalties."[53] James was troubled by Anna's adherence to Bothwell, who was forfeited and driven from the country in 1595 (following a rout by James's army), yet realized that there was little he could do to prevent his queen from socializing with those whom he perceived to be his enemies. In 1600, after the discovery of the Gowrie Conspiracy, Anna again demonstrated that she held her personal loyalties in high regard and was reluctant to sacrifice them in the face of the demands of the King, even if her actions could be construed as treasonous. Gowrie was a member of the Ruthven family, against whom James also bore great animosity due to their participation in numerous plots during James's minority. In the aftermath of the plot, the Earl of Gowrie was outlawed and the majority of his family members were likewise punished for his transgressions. Anna, however, had formed a close friendship with Gowrie's sister, Beatrix Ruthven, who served as one of her maids of honour. While Anna eventually assented to having Beatrix removed from her household, she continued to stay in contact with her, which directly violated James's orders to his wife.[54] In Anna's dealing with Beatrix and her sisters (with whom Anna was also close), historians have conventionally seen not a political act, but, rather, only the womanly devotion of Anna to her friends. As Agnes Strickland has condescendingly remarked, "the queen had a feeling heart, and to those desolate as the young Ruthvens, she often showed the most disinterested kindness and compassion – qualities which counterbalanced many flaws in her temper and errors in tact and judgement."[55] However, the support that Anna extended to members of her circle, even in the face of official opposition, had a political impact on the Jacobean court in Scotland and this was not unobserved by her contemporaries. Hence, these involvements in factional politics at the Scottish court were noted by diplomats surrounding Anna and "throughout her years in Scotland, report after report had mentioned Anna's political influence."[56]

In the face of opposition from the Calvinist Kirk and the elite faction that was staunchly Protestant, Anna formed a circle that included both moderate Protestants and Catholics. One of her closest friends in Scotland was Henrietta Stuart, Countess of

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[53] Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 198.
[54] For more discussion of the Gowrie Conspiracy, a rather shadowy episode to which no entirely satisfying explanation has been formulated, see Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, pp. 61-65.
[55] Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, p. 77.
[56] Sarah Gristwood, *Arbella: England's Lost Queen* (London: Bantam, 2003), p. 288.

Huntly.[57] Henrietta was a devoted patron of the arts and a cultural figure in her own right at the Scottish court. With Henrietta at her side, Anna formed her court at Dunfermline into a notable cultural centre where architects, musicians, actors, and poets all enjoyed the Queen's patronage. One of the chief artistic recipients of Anna's favour and patronage at her court was Alexander Craig, who dedicated many of his published poems to the queen, publicly acknowledging the assistance that she had provided to him.[58] In Anna's court at Dunfermline, one can see the underlying pattern of cultural display and symbolic performance that was to characterize her later life in England. In addition, one can see in her early years in Scotland one of the other tendencies that was to characterize her later life in England: her conspicuous expenditure. Historians have often made much of Anna's extravagant spending, seeing in it evidence of her childishness and naivety. However, Anna's expenditures were no less large than those of James and, it is arguable that in a Renaissance monarchy (with its emphasis on ostentatious display) large scale spending on things such as jewellery, clothing, court entertainments, and architectural expansion were par for the course and not anomalous traits of Anna alone. Display was not a "mere peripheral activity, but a central instrument of government" and expenditure was necessary to produce and maintain a suitable royal image.[59] In terms of her personal finances, Anna was not the selfish woman obsessed with trifles that dominates the portrait constructed by many scholars. During her time in Scotland, she recognized that the royal households (both hers and James's) were running deficits due to their high levels of spending. It was she who ordered the formation of the financial grouping known as the Octavians to assist her in reforming her household budget and it was she who recommended them to her husband after they had initial success with her finances. Likewise, James's expenditures on jewellery and fashion were equally as high as Anna's, yet he has received far less attention on this account than his wife.[60]

As queen consort, Anna was not treated dismissively by the courtiers that surrounded her at the Scottish court. Nor was she excluded from all serious discussions

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[57] For more on Henrietta Stuart, see Ruth Grant, "Politicking Jacobean Women: Lady Ferniehirst, the Countess of Arran and the Countess of Huntly, c. 1580-1603," in Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen M. Meikle, eds., *Women in Scotland, c. 1100-1750* (Phantassie: Tuckwell Press, 1999), pp. 95-104.
[58] The poems which Craig dedicated to Anna can be found in Alexander Craig, *The Poetical Works of Alexander Craig of Rose-Craig, 1604-1631*, David Laing, ed. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1966).
[59] Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1973), p. 74.
[60] See Maureen M. Meikle, "Holde her at the Oeconomicke Rule of the House: Anna of Denmark and Scottish Court Finances, 1589-1603," in Ewan and Meikle, eds., *Women in Scotland*, pp. 105-111.

of state as a frivolous woman who merited no political attention. As demonstrated by Elizabeth I's attempts to persuade Anna from the continuation of her feud with Maitland, England's government recognized that Anna was a person of consequence at the Scottish court: one whose actions had political ramifications. Robert Cecil, Elizabeth's principal Secretary of State and chief minister during the last years of her reign, was engaged from the mid-1590s onwards in a secret correspondence with James regarding his possible accession to the English throne, a correspondence that both men were anxious to keep secret due to Elizabeth's absolute refusal to tolerate speculation regarding the future monarch of England. Many historians have noted that James's smooth accession to the English throne was due largely to Cecil's exhaustive work behind the scenes before Elizabeth's death and he was well rewarded by James by retaining his post as chief advisor after the King moved into his Southern realm.[61] Cecil was well aware of Anna's political activities in Scotland and with her involvement in state affairs. He was, initially, very uneasy about the extent of her political engagement, fearing that she would be able to downplay him in James's mind and undo many of his efforts to ingratiate himself in James's favour. Cecil even went so far as to warn James to be wary of his wife and her activities, lest she inadvertently endanger his chances of success at inheriting the English crown. To this end, it was reported to Cecil that "she [Anna] is presently and will still be [dealing] in matters of importance to the greatest causes,"[62] and later, "always the Queen knows all."[63] Cecil's advice to James regarding his wife was that she should be kept in the dark as to their ongoing talks regarding what would occur when Elizabeth died. He deputized Lord Henry Howard to warn James against his Queen. Willson writes that "the King, with a closer knowledge of his consort and quite aware that she was prying and meddlesome, took the admonition in good part."[64] While Willson chooses to characterize Anna's political activities as, essentially, the idiotic and unwanted blunderings of a woman in serious affairs, it is clear that she was involved in state affairs and that this was acknowledged by her contemporaries. In Scotland, Anna showed herself to be "strong

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[61] For an analysis of Robert Cecil and his political career at both the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts, see Pauline Croft, "Can a Bureaucrat Be a Favourite? Robert Cecil and the Strategies of Power," in J.H. Elliott and L.W. Brockliss, eds., *The World of the Favourite* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 81-95 and Pauline Croft, ed., *Patronage, Culture and Power: The Early Cecils* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

[62] This appears in the Cecil papers in letters written in 1597 and is cited in Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 197.

[63] Cecil, 1598, cited in Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 197.

[64] Willson, *King James VI and I*, p. 157.

willed and fiercely determined to have what she saw as her rights recognized. She had a will of her own and was prepared to fight for her own interests."[65]

While Cecil felt that to include Anna in plans for James's English accession was folly, James found it expedient in some cases to actively involve Anna in his dealings with foreign powers. During her time in Scotland, and with assistance from her openly Catholic confidant the Countess of Huntly (who provided her friend with a Catholic catechism in French), Anna converted to Catholicism.[66] A more detailed discussion of her Catholicism will be offered later, but for now it must be noted that, while Anna's faith was a guarded secret in England, in Scotland James found it expedient to involve her, because of her faith, in his dealings with the Catholic powers and his efforts to persuade them to support his claim to the English throne. During the 1590s, James was unable to negotiate openly with the Pope and the Catholic states of Spain, France, and Venice, because of the risk of Elizabeth being angered by the idea of his openly negotiating with her foreign enemies.[67] Thus, Anna, with James's full agreement, acted as his intermediary with those nations. Anna readily engaged in correspondence with the Catholic rulers and even dropped subtle hints that, were James supported as Elizabeth's heir, there was a chance that Anna could persuade him to convert as well or at least to offer toleration and increased opportunities to England's Catholic population. During this period, "in his anxiety to stand well with Rome, James was ready to utilise…his wife's religious proclivities for the furtherance of his own political ends."[68] Thus, while Cecil may have warned James against Anna, there clearly were instances where James recognized the advantages of including her in his attempts to gain the English crown. Likewise, although Cecil and his English cohorts felt that she should be excluded from all knowledge of James's behind-the-scenes attempts to build up a base of support for his claim to the throne, Anna must have been aware that he was involved in such activities. Despite the traditional conclusions drawn by most historians regarding Anna's time as queen consort of Scotland, it can be seen that "Anna's significance to the early Stuart court was not negligible."[69]

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[65] Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p. 64.
[66] Meikle and Payne, "Anne of Denmark," p. 195.
[67] For a discussion of James's wary dealings with Catholic states, see Willson, *King James VI and I*, pp. 142-143.
[68] Anna R.G.F. Warner, "James VI and Rome," *The English Historical Review*, 20 (1905), p. 126.
[69] Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 207.

While Anna was engaged in political activity in Scotland in an array of areas, it was in the matter of her son, James's heir, Henry, that her greatest efforts were exerted. After several years of miscarriages, Anna was finally delivered of a full-term healthy baby boy on February 19, 1594 at Stirling Castle. Amid national celebration for the birth of an heir, the child was christened Henry, Duke of Rothesay. This was a golden period in Anna and James's marriage, as Anna fulfilled the chief role expectation for a queen consort, the begetting of heirs. James indulged his wife in every aspect and would countenance no ill-words against her. As mother of the next king, Anna's position was strengthened and her influence was solidified. However, this golden period did not last for long and Anna was soon to be embroiled in the most intense and emotionally-agonizing struggle of her reign. Shortly after Henry's baptism, Anna's maternal bliss was sharply interrupted when James decreed that she would not retain custody of the prince, who was to be raised at Stirling in the care of John Erskine, Earl of Mar, and his mother, Dame Annabel Murray. James himself had been raised by Annabel and her husband, and regarded Mar as the closest person he had to a brother. During James's youth, when he was nominally king but the actual ruling of the country was conducted by a series of regents (who fought bitterly amongst themselves), the safety of the heir to the throne had been a rather serious security issue. James had been a pawn in the violent factional struggles that frequently accompanied a royal minority in Scotland and had been the victim of numerous abduction plots in his youth. His wish to place his heir in the safe hands of an absolutely trustworthy individual, in a castle known for its security and ability to withstand a siege, was, therefore, understandable.[70]

Anna, however, who had been raised in the relatively secure environment of the Danish court, was implacable in her hatred of this scheme. She became an absolute enemy of Mar and his mother and, just as a faction had formed around her of Maitland's enemies, one now formed of those hostile to Mar that included a number of known Catholics. The formation of this anti-Mar faction was well-known in England and, in a letter on the subject of Scottish affairs, Sir Thomas Lake wrote to Sir Robert Sidney in 1595, "in Scotland there has been a work in hand to get the young prince out of the

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[70] Williamson, in *The Myth of the Conqueror*, argues that James's removal of the prince from Anna's custody is attributable to his "fanatical" woman-hating (pp. 16-17). I feel, however, that such a view is unsustainable in light of James's own, well-documented concerns over security, his experiences as a youth, and the fact that Mar's mother, a woman, also had a hand in the raising of the prince. James's supposed rampant misogyny is not enough to explain his decision to place Henry in the care of Mar.

custody of Marre; of which the heads were the Queen and the chancellor…Most supporters of the device were of the devotion of Spain."[71] Interestingly, Anna had, as the above-cited passage indicates, healed her feud with Maitland and joined factional forces with him against Mar.[72] This suggests that Anna was perhaps more of a politicking princess than most accounts would acknowledge. Despite Anna's never-wavering opposition to Henry being removed from her custody, this was an issue upon which James would not compromise, due to his own fears for Henry's well-being. The extent to which James feared for Henry's security, to the degree that he would allow neither Anna nor the other political elites of the kingdom to have custody of the boy can be evidenced in his written instructions to Mar regarding Henry, where he wrote:

> Because in the suretie of my sonne consistis my suretie and that I have concreditid unto you the charge of his keeping upon the trust I have of youre honestie, this present thairfore sall be ane warrande unto you not to delyver him out of youre handis except I commande you with my awin mouth, and being in sikke cumpanie as I my self sall best lyke of, otheruayes not to delyver him for any charge or message that can cum from me. And in kayce God call me at any tyme that nather for Quene nor Estaites pleasure ye delyver him.[73]

On this issue, James was impervious to Anna's demands and "a succession of stormy debates, agitated by the Queen's faction in the council, ensued; but all failed in shaking the King's firm trust in the loyalty of the Earl of Mar and his lady-mother."[74] In the face of James's steadfastness, Anna was forced to wait until 1603 to stage a dramatic coup that finally brought Henry back into her custody. In addition to two known miscarriages, Anna bore seven children to James: Henry, in 1594, Elizabeth, in 1596, Margaret, in 1598, Charles, in 1600, Mary, in 1605, and Sophia, in 1606. Of these seven, only Henry, Elizabeth, and Charles survived infancy. Charles appears to have been devoted to his mother, while Anna's relations with Elizabeth became rather strained in later life. But it was to Henry, her firstborn and, until his early death in 1612, James's heir, that Anna's intense affection was given. Agnes Strickland rather dramatically writes that "the heart of the young queen was alive to the most passionate instincts of

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[71] Sir Thomas Lake, in C.L. Kingsford, ed., *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley at Penhurst Place* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934), vol. II, October 1, 1595, p. 168.
[72] For more discussion on this, see Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, pp. 53-54.
[73] James I to the Earl of Mar in the *Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Mar and Kellie* (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1904), pp. 43-44.
[74] Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, p. 62.

maternity, and these were painfully outraged," by James's removal of Henry.[75] On a personal level, her forced separation from her son was devastating to Anna, and, on a political level, it weakened her position. As queen consort, Anna's greatest strength was in her position as mother to the future king and the degree to which she was presumed to be a potent influence on him affected the extent to which she could establish herself as a powerful political force.

Most historians have analyzed Anna's agitations to gain custody of Henry solely in terms of her maternal yearnings, and have thus generated a one-sided view of Anna that is strongly grounded in stereotypical images of woman as lacking in ambition except concerning matters of child-rearing. On this note, Anna was supposedly enthralled by "the mere instincts of maternity," and nothing more.[76] However, in contrast to this view, as Anna never expressed so strong an opposition to her other children being raised in the households of both Scottish and English nobles, it is arguable that her special attention to Prince Henry centred on the fact that, as her first-born and the heir apparent to his father's throne, Henry was a visible and potent manifestation of the primacy of Anna's position as queen consort. In this sense, the reason that "Anna was firmly opposed to losing her child," may have to do with something more than maternal love.[77] Her attempts to keep the heir to the throne publicly in her presence may be attributable to her desire to bolster her own political status as an effective queen consort. Likewise, in a nation such as Scotland, where historic battles over the guardianship of a royal child had been illustrative of the principle that, in the event of a king's death and a minority government, control of royal children was tantamount to control over the state, Anna's actions can be interpreted as having multiple meanings which most scholars have been slow to recognize. This was an area in which Anna had some prior experience.

Her father, Frederick II, had died while his heir, Anna's brother Christian was still a child, and Anna's mother, Sophia, had made numerous attempts (though unsuccessful) to gain control over the regency government of Denmark. Thus, Anna was well aware of the importance of the guardianship of royal heirs. While James was concerned with the safety of his heir, Anna (in addition to simply loving her child and not wishing to be parted from him) was focused on ensuring that she was enabled to exert influence over

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[75] *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[77] Stewart, *The Cradle King*, p. 140.

her son and thus strengthen her own position. Willson has stated that, in her conflict with Mar, James "had shown both firmness and restraint, but Anne had been folly incarnate," and this is in keeping with the usually virulent attacks on Anna's character that most scholars have engaged in.[78] Yet, studies that analyze the careers of queens consort have illustrated that it was often through their offspring that such women were able to exert the greatest amount of political influence, and it is reasonable to suggest that Anna's behaviour in the matter was more meaningful than a tantrum thrown by a "pettish" woman of "limited intelligence…who hatched pathetic little plots."[79] While in Scotland, Anna "never wholly refrained from political behaviour," and this was also the case when it came to her actions concerning her eldest son.[80] By the end of the sixteenth-century it was becoming increasingly apparent that Elizabeth would likely die in the near future and that James was the strongest claimant to the English throne, especially with Cecil working in England to bolster his claim and find supporters for the Scottish King. On March 24, 1603, Elizabeth I died after an impressive near-45 year reign and (although there is considerable doubt as to whether Elizabeth, on her deathbed, ever officially appointed him as her heir) James succeeded to the crown. As Anna was pregnant at the time, the royal couple agreed that James would travel to London first and Anna would follow, accompanied by their two eldest children, while Charles, only three, would remain in Scotland for a period. The Earl of Mar, as one of James's most trusted advisors, had made the journey with the King, with the intention that he return to Scotland in mid-April in order to, and, it can be assumed, much to Anna's relief, relinquish custody of Henry to the Queen. However, Mar did not return by the appointed time and it was rumoured that his journey was being postponed until mid-May.

Anna, understandably anxious to arrive in her new kingdom and regain possession of her son, decided to take matters into her own hands and claim custody in Mar's absence. On May 7 Anna arrived at Stirling Castle, ostensibly to visit the prince (although it later became clear that her intentions were to take him with her when she left). While at Stirling, Mar's wife, in accordance with the explicit orders she had been given both by her husband and by James, refused Anna's request. Sources indicate that, at this refusal, Anna flew into a storming rage that resulted in a miscarriage. There is

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[78] Willson, *King James VI and I*, p. 118.
[79] Williamson, *The Myth of the Conqueror*, p. 15.
[80] Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," p. 207.

also the suggestion that she purposefully induced the miscarriage in order to persuade James of the desperateness of her cause. The Venetian ambassador, Scaramelli, reported that Anna had induced the miscarriage by violently beating her stomach at Stirling.[81] Other sources suggested that she had "hastened the miscarriage by taking some 'balme watter'."[82] Others stated that, although the miscarriage was natural and not induced, Anna exaggerated the extent of her physical suffering to win sympathy from James. Maximilan de Béthune, duc de Sully, one of the French ambassadors at James's English court wrote in his memoirs, set down years after he had returned to France, that Anna had carried the body of her miscarried fetus to England with her in order to counter "the endeavours that had been used to persuade the public that its death was only feigned."[83] Likewise, Scaramelli later reported that "the Queen, though really seriously ill, has made herself out worse than she is, in order to win the King's pity for her in her disobedience."[84] These diplomatic dispatches suggest that, when Anna determined to obtain something, there was little that could be done to prevent her from achieving her goals. In this situation, at least, in contrast to traditional interpretations of Anna, it seems clear that "rather than being manipulated, it was often Anna who did the manipulating."[85]

Shortly afterwards, Mar returned to Stirling and the situation worsened. Both Anna and Mar sent angry letters to James attempting to justify their actions. It took some time for messengers to arrive with James's reply, but, eventually, the situation was resolved in Anna's favour and Mar was commanded to turn Henry over to his mother. Although James wrote to Anna in stern terms, chiding her for her "womanly apprehensions" and her disobedience, he also stated the honour and love that he had for her "which, by the law of God and nature, I ought to do to my wife and mother of my children."[86] Although he took "small delight to meddle in so unpleasant a process," he also noted that "for the respect of your honourable birth and descent I married you; but the love and respect I now bear you is for that ye are my married wife and so partaker of my honour, as of all my other fortunes."[87] Anna left Stirling in triumph and progressed to Edinburgh before

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[81] Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, in Horatio F. Brown, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. X, May 28, 1603, p. 40.
[82] Meikle and Payne, "Anne of Denmark," p. 195.
[83] Maximilan de Béthune, duc de Sully, *Memoirs of Maximilan de Béthune, Duke of Sully*, Charlotte Lennox, ed. (London: Printed for A. Miller, R. and J. Dodsley, and W. Shropshire, 1756 [STC 143289]), pp. 134-135.
[84] Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. X, June 4, 1603, p. 43.
[85] Meikle, "A Meddlesome Princess," p. 127.
[86] James I to Anna in Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI and I*, May, 1603, p. 214.
[87] *Ibid.*

beginning the journey south. When she entered her new realm, it was with the heir to the throne at her side – a potent and clearly visible expression of her fecundity as a queen consort and her importance as a queen mother.[88] Having the prince at her side as she entered her new realm endowed Anna with a level of dynastic charisma that strengthened her position and provided her with a vast quantity of symbolic capital.[89] In relation to Anna's final and ultimately successful attempt to regain custody of her child, "it was the queen's last reported actions in Scotland that must finally disestablish that tradition of the English Anna as the pale and wavering queen of triviality."[90] Anna's actions while Queen of Scotland, particularly her ready engagement in the factional politics of the Stuart court, show that she was a woman of political ability and fierce resolve. By the time that Anna departed Scotland for her new kingdom, she had "earned a reputation for independence and even a certain ruthlessness in her exercise of political influence."[91]

Soon after James's accession, English courtiers anxious for advancement and the favour of the monarch began to flock to Anna in hopes of ingratiating themselves with her. In spite of his prior warnings to James, Cecil was one of the first to extend warm words and greetings to Anna. He wrote to the new Queen of England shortly after her final confrontation with Mar in May of 1603. In his letters, Cecil commended himself to Anna and stressed his devotion to her service. He also noted that James had not yet told him of her troubles with Mar in gaining custody of Henry and wrote that, had he known of her plight, he would have been a strong supporter of her cause.[92] Cecil was not the only courtier to flock to Anna. As Anna travelled south and her husband began to make preparations for her household in London, a group of female courtiers decided to journey north and intercept Anna in the hopes of being accepted into her household establishment and confidence before she was met by the official delegation selected by James to welcome her. The ploy was successful and Anna chose many of these women to become members of her household, in opposition to James's wishes that her household be composed of the gentlewomen that he had selected and dispatched north.[93]

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[88] See Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 66.
[89] See David M. Bergeron, "King James's Civic Pageant and Parliamentary Speech in March 1604," *Albion*, 34 (2002), pp. 213-231.
[90] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 28.
[91] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 8.
[92] Robert Cecil to Anna, in Mary Anne Everett Green, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of James I* (Nendeln: Kraus Reprints, 1967 [1857]), vol. VIII, 1603, p. 12.
[93] Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, pp. 93-94.

England had been without a queen consort since the death of Henry VIII in 1547, when his widow became the Queen Dowager (the nation had not had a foreign queen consort since Henry VIII's divorce from Anne of Cleves), and the anticipated arrival of Anna at the English court caused something of a coup as elite women began the process of vying for potentially influential positions in the new Queen's household.[94] Consequently, two groupings of aristocratic women journeyed north when news reached the court in London that Anna had began her journey to the border. As the Queen's household was supported through the same crown revenues as the King's, it was seen as necessary to have the monarch's formal approval when it came to the composition of his wife's establishment. Openly exhibiting her independence, Anna, with two exceptions (the most notable being Penelope Rich), ignored entirely the "official" delegation of ladies dispatched by James and, instead, selected her own ladies, from amongst those assembled, choosing individuals with whom she shared common interests, particularly on a cultural level. The ladies sent north by James were a grouping of highly respectable, mature women, who had occupied court positions under Elizabeth. They included The Countesses of Worcester and Kildare, and the Ladies Herbert, Scrope, Rich, and Walsingham. The "unauthorized" grouping whom Anna chose to be her ladies were quite the reverse of the ones officially sent. Their number included the Countess of Bedford and the Ladies Hastings, Cecil, Hatton, and Harington. Strikingly, they were mostly supporters and associates of the executed Earl of Essex. Most of these individuals had fallen into disfavour following the Earl of Essex's ill-fated rebellion attempt of 1601, and this may explain why they were so eager to cement their popularity with new rulers. The group included Essex's sister and the wife of one of his partners in conspiracy, the Earl of Bedford (who was lucky to have escaped from the incident with his head still intact). In addition to these ladies, Anna also brought a few select women from her time as Queen of Scotland and Danish members of her entourage that had remained in her service after her marriage. Perhaps the most significant appointment that Anna made to her service was that accorded to Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford and the wife of the previously disgraced Earl of Bedford. Anna, twenty-nine years of age when she entered her new realm, appears to have formed an almost instant friendship with the highly cultured twenty-eight year old countess. While it appears as though Bedford later felt a

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[94] For the importance of advancement to a position within the Queen's household, see Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, pp. 210-240.

measure of disillusionment with her royal mistress, the pair were initially very close and seem to have been on kind terms until the Queen's death.[95] Anna's friendship with Lucy was a symbiotic one, and each shared the same cultural outlook. Bedford was "easily the most important patroness of the Jacobean court, except for Queen Anne herself."[96]

Their instant and long-term rapport is reminiscent of the friendship that Anna formed with the equally culturally sophisticated Countess of Huntly when she first arrived in Scotland. Lady Anne Clifford, who observed Anna's English entry, noted the fast friendship she formed with Bedford and suggested that Bedford had even intercepted Anna before she crossed the English border. Clifford noted, "thither came my Lady of Bedford who was so great a Woman with the Queen as everybody much respected, she having attended the Queen out of Scotland."[97] Bedford was to be an influential participant in the many displays of theatre and cultural patronage which characterized much of Anna's English reign. In selecting the ladies that were to form her intimate circle, Anna chose those who had similar tastes as herself, ladies who were intelligent, accomplished and literary; Anna's circle was composed of women who shared her keen interest and skills in cultural performance and display. By the time that Anna's party had reached Althorp, Clifford wrote that, "we [Clifford and her mother] saw the Queen's favour to Lady Hatton and Lady Cecil, for she shewed no favour to the elderly Ladies but to Lady Rich and such like company."[98] Anne Clifford and her mother had also travelled north to meet Anna and proceeded with her as she advanced south to London to rendezvous with James. Clifford's diary entries for this period captured something of the enthusiasm with which Anna was greeted by her new subjects. Dudley Carleton, writing to John Chamberlain, noted that Anna possessed an "extraordinary good grace" and had delighted her new subjects on her progress south by not wearing a mask (the usual practice of a travelling aristocratic woman) and allowing the people to see her face.[99] Anne Clifford noted that Anna was gracious and pleased the crowd, much as she had

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[95] Helen Payne, "Lucy Russell," *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 320.
[96] Barbara K. Lewalski, "Lucy, Countess of Bedford: Images of a Jacobean Courtier and Patroness," in Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker, eds., *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 52.
[97] Lady Anne Clifford, *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford*, D.J.H. Clifford, ed. (London: Alan Sutton, 1990), 1603, p. 23.
[98] *Ibid.*, 1603, p. 24.
[99] Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, in Maurice Lee Jr., ed., *Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, 1603-1624: Jacobean Letters* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1972), July 4, 1603, pp. 34-35.

done when she first arrived in Scotland. To the nobles that had assembled around her, Anna was affable and, as Clifford wrote, "kissed us all and used us kindly."[100] Anna turned her progress south into a triumphal affair and, "from the start she took care to ensure that her regal splendour was not inferior in any way to that of the last Tudor sovereign."[101]

Having been ruled for so long by Elizabeth I, a sovereign with a keen understanding of performative behaviour and adept at accruing popular adulation, the English people had a high standard of role performance when it came to the behaviours that they expected their monarch to display. In meeting these high expectations, Anna was adroit. After Elizabeth's death, "the mythography of female power did not disappear at the Jacobean court," rather, it was appropriated and reinvented by Anna of Denmark.[102] As in Scotland, the queen appeared at all times in her public performances as a gracious and capable woman, always with an air of high regality and majesty. Anna was skilled in meeting the role expectations of the populace and, "like her predecessor Elizabeth, Anna recognized that royal power could not be separated from the symbolic aura with which it was surrounded."[103] As she journeyed south and entered the capital, Anna maintained her role performance and, one can see in her journey into England, that "Anna's manners were politically astute, establishing her in the affections of the English by reminding them of the great Queen Elizabeth."[104]

Anna and James were crowned together on July 25, 1603 at Westminster Abbey. The ceremony had been postponed due to an outbreak of plague that was raging in London and, when it did occur, the coronation lacked the customary brilliance and lustre because of the ravages brought by the plague.[105] Anna and James, however, compensated for this in the next year, when they staged the official opening of Parliament with a grand civic pageant through the city.[106] Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the crowning of

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[100] Clifford, *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford*, 1603, p. 23.
[101] T.B. Pugh, "A Portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark at Parham Park, Sussex," *The Seventeenth Century*, 8 (1993), p. 172.
[102] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 1.
[103] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[104] *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[105] For a full account of Anna's English coronation, see John Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, His Royal Consort, Family, and Court* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1967 [1828]), vol. I, pp. 228-234.
[106] For more on the symbolic significance of royal entries, see Roy Strong, *Splendor at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and the Theatre of Power* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973). See also, Clifford Geertz, "Centers,

the new King and Queen was Anna's refusal during the service to accept the Anglican Communion offered to her by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in keeping with her Catholicism, of which more will be said later. During her public interactions with her new subjects following James's accession, Anna played the role of queen to perfection and built up a strong base of support among the English populace. In public, she enacted "to perfection the role of warm, gracious, lovely and beloved Queen," and, in so doing, she presented to the people "a sharp contrast to James's much-criticized aloofness and reserve."[107] After being crowned, Anna and James began the process of establishing their courts and Anna began to enter into the extravagant cultural activities for which she is so well-known. Ironically, it was in Anna's utilization of symbolic display, itself intrinsically intangible, that, for many historians, her most tangible contributions to Jacobean culture were made.

Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in *Local Knowledge*, pp. 121-145, where Elizabeth I's use of symbolic entries is discussed.

[107] Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, p. 18.

Chapter 4: Cultural Output and the Jacobean Court: Anna of Denmark, Court Masquing and Cultural Patronage

Anna began her masquing activities shortly after entering England when she commissioned the *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* in 1604 from Samuel Daniel. Masquing was, at this juncture, a relatively underdeveloped performative genre in England, although it was highly developed on the continent. Masques and 'disguisings' had been popular at the English court during the early years of the reign of Henry VIII, but had not evolved to the same degree as those presented in other European courts.[1] Influenced mainly by Italian artistic tastes, masques were a complex artistic form, danced rather than acted, equipped with lavish costumes and elaborate set designs and often incorporated intricate mythological themes and legendary characters. Queen Anna elevated the English masque to an equal footing with the glittering performances that were enacted at other European courts. "The masque was an art form Anna was to make her own: superb, lavish and immensely costly spectacle built around a moral designed to hammer home the importance of the monarchy."[2] Through her participation in the masques, Anna showcased herself both to her subjects and to foreign dignitaries as an exceptionally literate and sophisticated monarch – a living embodiment of the qualities thought fitting for a member of a royal dynasty to possess. Her participation in masques had the capacity to "position her as the emblem of both king and court, the living embodiment of the circulation of power within the Jacobean courtly community."[3] The French ambassador noted that Anna was "naturally bold and enterprising," loving "pomp and grandeur, tumult and intrigue."[4] The masque form, which Anna appropriated and crafted into something truly unique in England at that time, gave her ample opportunities to be involved with all of these things. Through her use and development of the masques, Anna found a potent vehicle for patronage (and all the political involvement that that entailed) and the articulation of a political agenda, because "of all the Stuart theatrical forms, the masque had the greatest potential for political comment."[5]

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[1] For more on the masque form at the court of Henry VIII and women's involvement in the displays, see Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, pp. 235-237.
[2] Gristwood, *Arbella*, p. 285.
[3] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 43.
[4] Sully, *Memoirs*, pp. 133-134.
[5] Graham Parry, "The Politics of the Jacobean Masque," in J.R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring, eds., *Theatre and Government Under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 87.

Most historians have regarded the court masques of the Stuart period as little more than mere diversions crafted by the ruling class for entertainment and for their own amusement. This stance resulted in a traditional perception of masques that was, generally, quite dismissive and inclined not to regard them as being worthy of serious study. However, the growing dialogue between historians and social theorists has resulted in a more comprehensive understanding of the importance of cultural output and symbolic performance, especially in the case of Renaissance monarchies, where state theatre was an integral part of the governance of a realm that was dominated by the intangibility of royalty and divine right.[6] Far from being mere trifles, masques were a vital form of expression for the articulation of the central value system espoused by the ruling classes. Hence, "in the final count, a masque was a display of political magic."[7] At the English court of the early seventeenth-century, monarchy and the trappings of grandeur and symbolism that were its mark could not be separated. The monarchy crafted elaborate symbolic systems through which to display itself and these symbolic systems formed the dominant view of the monarchy. To a large extent, effective kingship was based on the monarch's ability and willingness to embrace the techniques of the state theatre. The masques achieved exactly this and they, "more than any other form of courtly display, exhibited that quality of magnificence which was felt to be the essential attribute of monarchy in the Renaissance."[8]

The royal courts (I use the plural term to denote the separate courts of Anna, James, and Prince Henry) where Anna's masques were staged, was the location where the royal language was deployed and, in this sense, cultural concerns were always bound up with political considerations.[9] Masques served a dual purpose for the Jacobean court; they were, simultaneously, cultural expressions and political statements. In this respect, "court masques belong to the wider culture of aristocratic masquing, ceremonial and entertainment which punctuated early modern life, providing both amusement and a means of representation and self-presentation."[10] Clifford Geertz, in his work on Bali,

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[6] For more on this, see Strong, *Art and Power*, Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd: The Culture of the Stuart Court, 1603-1642* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), and Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

[7] Parry, "The Politics of the Jacobean Masque," p. 115.

[8] Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd*, p. 41.

[9] Monod, *The Power of Kings*, p. 239.

[10] James Knowles, "Tied/To Rules of Flattery?: Court Drama and the Masques," in Michael Hattaway, ed., *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p. 531.

described state theatre as "meta-physical theatre…theatre designed to express a view of the ultimate nature of reality and, at the same time, to shape the existing conditions of life to be consonant with that reality; that is, theatre to present an ontology and, by presenting it, to make it happen – make it actual."[11] This view of monarchical display is equally applicable to Stuart England. Masques were bound up with political concerns and expressed the glory and sacredness of the monarchy as their central message. They were an expression of the idea, prevalent in the period, that "monarchy was not just a system of worldly dominance; it was a reflection of God, and an ideal mirror of human identity. It was a link between the sacred and the self."[12] Masques set out to present their audience with intricately crafted themes and images that reinforced "the divinity of Stuart rule."[13] By showcasing herself through her involvement in masques, Anna was able to craft an image of herself as the sacred embodiment of monarchy, a queen of mythic proportions who was comparable to goddesses and invested with divine authority. Shils has noted that "sacredness breeds authority," and the manner in which Anna presented herself in masques certainly endowed her with an air of the sacred, which both displayed and further enhanced her political capital.[14] Recognizing their political potency, Anna did not hesitate to use "her role as presenter of court masques to intervene in diplomatic politics."[15]

The court in early modern England was a theatre state, "a state that manifests its power and meaning in exemplary public performances."[16] It was a state where the symbology of monarchical power was intertwined with elaborate and overt manifestations of the royal family's regal magnificence. Thus, "the manifestations of courtly magnificence that registered most deeply were usually transient in form: the extravagant scale of the hospitality afforded within the court, and the ostentatious spectacles and ceremonial displays provided to the world outside it."[17] Historical and

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[11] Geertz, *Negara*, p. 104. For commentary on Geertz's cultural theories, see Fred Inglis, *Clifford Geertz: Culture, Custom, and Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).
[12] Monod, *The Power of Kings*, p. 3.
[13] Roy Strong, *The Tudor and Stuart Monarchy: Pageantry, Painting, Iconography* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), p. 107.
[14] Shils, *Centre and Periphery*, p. 5. See also Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 60.
[15] Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, "Anne of Denmark and the Subversions of Masquing," *Criticism*, 35 (1993), p. 342.
[16] Stephen Greenblatt, "Introduction," in Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, and Katherine Eisaman Maus, eds., *The Norton Shakespeare*, p. 49.
[17] John Adamson, "The Kingdom of England and Great Britain: The Tudor and Stuart Courts, 1509-1714," in John Adamson, ed., *The Princely Courts of Europe: Ritual, Politics and Culture Under the Ancien Régime 1500-1750* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), p. 100.

literary analyses of the masques with which Anna was directly involved illustrate that the storylines and themes of each were shaped around political considerations that were current at the time of their performance, giving further weight to the argument of their politicized nature, but the overriding theme of all the masques was the glorification of the monarchy and of queens/goddesses in particular and Anna specifically.[18] The court masques that Anna staged were "reflections of the cult of the royal image," and Anna used them to full effect as a means to showcase herself and her court as sites of high culture and embedded majesty.[19] They presented an image of the aristocracy and monarchy that was simultaneously unified and glorified. In this respect, "Anna and her fellow masquers operated as priestesses in a kind of state religion."[20]

Invitations to the Queen's masques were viewed by foreign ambassadors as special marks of favour shown to them by the monarchy and, in one example, the French ambassador was up in arms for a period of several weeks when the Spanish ambassador was invited to a masque and he was not. Anna, at that juncture, favoured a Spanish marriage for her son Henry over a French one and both of the respective ambassadors perceived that, in handing out invitations to her masque, Anna was making a political statement. Following the formal dancing of the masque, the performers, particularly the lead (usually Anna) would journey out into the audience and select dance partners. This also presented Anna with a moment to express her favour or disapproval towards other courtiers and ambassadors. In this sense, "the initial taking-out was highly political and carefully deferential, suggesting its usefulness for determining the interplay of court alliances or political overtures."[21] While historians have come to recognize the political and cultural importance of the Jacobean masques, earlier scholars were quick to dismiss them. Consequently, Anna's role in the masques was once cited as an example of her frivolity and foolishness; masquing was depicted as the sole passion of Anna's life and the driving force behind all of her actions. Such a characterization, however, ignores the fact that she ceased to be actively involved in the masques as a performer after 1612. Yet the one-dimensional view of Anna as obsessed with masquing and interested in little else

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[18] See Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* and McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage* for a more in-depth analysis of each of Anna's masques and the specific political concerns which were presented in them.
[19] Strong, *Art and Power*, p. 67.
[20] Middaugh, *'The Golden Tree,'* p. 58.
[21] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 86.

has long been ingrained among scholars since the beginning of the twentieth-century when masquing was described as "one of the ruling passions of her life."[22]

An interesting feature of the historiography surrounding Anna (and one that is demonstrative of the extent to which the popular conception of her as totally unimportant to the Stuart court has taken hold) is that, after historians began to revise their earlier conceptions of the masques and acknowledge their importance, Anna was removed from being involved with them at all.[23] Hence, when the masques were perceived as outside the purview of the serious historian, they were attributed to Anna as an example of her stupidity and imprudence, but, when their cultural and political importance was recognized, they were portrayed as occurring because of the activities of others besides Anna. Often, Ben Jonson, whom Anna employed as the writer of several of her masques, was credited solely with them. While Jonson and others actually penned the masques in the technical sense of the term, it was Anna who chose the central themes and characters of the masques and informed writers that she patronized of the manner in which she wished the spectacles to be organized and performed. Modern understandings of the term "author" have led many to attribute the masques solely to Jonson and others and to ignore Anna's involvement.[24] Yet, Anna's contemporaries were in no doubt that it was she who crafted the performances, employing writers to set on paper themes and story lines that she herself devised. Zorzi Guistinian, a Venetian ambassador at James's court, wrote in a dispatch home about one the masques, describing "the splendour of the spectacle, which was worthy of her Majesty's greatness. So well composed and ordered was it all that it is evident the mind of her Majesty, the authoress of the whole, is gifted no less highly than her person. She reaped universal applause."[25]

When the masques were criticized by observers, it was Anna and not the authors that she employed, who was pointed at. Anne Clifford wrote of an incident early in Anna's English reign where "there was much talk of a Mask which the Queen had at Winchester, and how all the ladies about the Court had gotten such ill names that it was grown a scandalous place, and the Queen herself was much fallen from her former

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[22] Ward, "Anne of Denmark," p. 433.
[23] For an excellent example of this, see Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance*, wherein Strong attributes all credit for the masques not to Anna but to her young son Henry. Recent work has been rightfully critical of Strong's denial of Anna's integral importance to the productions of the early Stuart masques.
[24] Barroll, "Theatre as Text," p. 179.
[25] Zorzi Giustinian to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. XI, January 24, 1608, p. 86.

greatness and reputation."[26] It seems that certain masques that Anna mounted were viewed as scandalous by some observers and, when this was the case, it was Anna who bore the criticisms. In the *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, Anna chose for herself (playing the role of Athena) a costume that some in the audience viewed as inappropriate. Dudley Carleton wrote that "only Pallas had a trick by herself; for her clothes were not so much below the knee but that we might see a woman had both feet and legs, which I never saw before."[27] Anna was no fool when it came to the intricacies of proper behaviour on the part of the queen, yet she still consciously chose to engage in displays that she must have known would be offensive to some. In this particular masque, Anna's choice of costume caused her to stand out alongside the other female performers, presenting herself as different and apart from them. In this case, Anna's overarching desire to cast herself as the personification of wisdom, standing above all the other court ladies that surrounded her, was more important than the potential disapproval that her revealing costume might provoke. The same desire was also at play in the *Masque of Blackness*, which likewise drew criticism from Carleton (this masque also marked the first collaboration between Anna's most famous protégés, Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones). In this masque, Anna and her ladies covered their faces, necks, and arms in black pigment to portray the daughters of the River Niger who journey to the royal court to pay homage to the monarch. Carleton wrote "the presentation of the mask at the first drawing of the traverse was very fair and their apparel rich, but too light and courtesan like. Their black faces and hands, which were painted and bare up the elbows, was a very loathsome sight."[28] As with the *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, however, Anna's view of the thematic importance of the whole was stronger than her concern that some would find the display scandalous. When it came to the court masques, Anna was the driving force behind their production and ensured that her vision of their construction would be actualized. Regardless of whether her contemporaries approved or not of aspects of the production, Anna performed regardless and it was upon her shoulders that criticisms fell.

Through her promotion of court masques in which she and her ladies were the central performers, Anna created for herself a meaningful space wherein she could express both her political and her cultural agenda. In this space, Anna built upon her

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[26] Clifford, *The Diaries of Anne Clifford*, 1603, p. 27.
[27] Carleton to Chamberlain, in *Carleton to Chamberlain*, January 16, 1604, p. 55.
[28] *Ibid.*, January 7, 1605, p. 68.

personal emblem of the golden tree and became an emblem herself: an emblem of the court and the monarchy itself.[29] She also established her court as a prominent cultural centre, one that gathered within in it some of the most accomplished artists of the day. In this, Anna recognized that "the hospitality of the court…was an instrument of royal policy."[30] It also enabled her to extend her patronage activities and her court circle to include many of the most culturally sophisticated actors at the Jacobean court. When Anna moved into her Southern kingdom in 1603, James settled an array of English properties upon her and she quickly went about establishing her court which (as it had in Scotland) functioned entirely autonomously from that of James's and, breaking from the actions of previous queens consort, she crafted her new houses as utterly separate spaces from those occupied by her husband. In these spaces, Anna established herself as the supreme cultural patron in the realm as she used her royal household and the physical spaces that it occupied as "the nexus for political and literary patronage."[31] Anna's culturally activities took place within the setting of her court, which stood as a separate establishment from that of James. James, throughout his reign, often displayed a notable lack of interest in cultural output and symbolic display, and this led to a situation wherein "whatever propagandist efforts there were on behalf of the court stemmed from Anna of Denmark rather than her husband."[32] The elaborate masques which Anna engaged in communicated powerful symbolic messages to her audiences. Geertz has written of the importance of "the ceremonial forms by which kings take possession of their realms," and the court masques offered Anna a sophisticated manner of displaying those ceremonial forms.[33] In her first years at the English court, Anna was to find one of her most fruitful forms of political expression in masquing and she also was able to craft an influential persona for herself as a spectacular queen. Anna recognized that "a world wholly demystified is a world wholly depoliticized,"[34] and the masques that she sponsored and performed in injected a potent element of the mystical into the Jacobean

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[29] Henry Peacham, *Minerva Britanna or a Garden of Heroical Devices, Furnished and Adorned with Emblemes and Impressas of Sundry Natures, Newly Devised, Moralized, and Published* (Leeds: The Scolar Press, 1966 [(1612): STC 19511]), p. 173.
[30] Adamson, "The Kingdom of England and Great Britain," p. 100.
[31] Louis H. Roper, "Unmasquing the Connections Between Jacobean Politics and Policy: The Circle of Anna of Denmark and the Beginning of the English Empire, 1614-18," in Carole Levin, Jo Eldridge Carney and Debra Barrett, eds., *High and Mighty Queens of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations* (New York: Palgrave, 2003), p. 47.
[32] Knowles, "Tied/To Rules of Flattery," p. 534.
[33] Geertz, *Local Knowledge*, p. 125.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 143.

court. The court masques in which she participated can be viewed as an excellent example of Goffman's concept of *dramatic realization* – essentially performances and actions that strive, through the deployment of symbolic language, to make visible the invisible.[35] The qualities which Anna desired to express as belonging to her were intangible ones and centred on the Renaissance ideals of majesty and royal self presentation. Masquing, alongside other cultural activities such as art patronage, granted to Anna, in effect, a blank canvas wherein she was able to craft richly symbolic images of herself that drew attention to the all-important, but invisible, qualities possessed by a queen. By staging these performances, Anna made the invisible visible. Likewise, by staging these events within the confines of her separate court establishments, Anna was able to emphasize that the performances were hers and hers alone – they owed nothing to James and were an extension solely of Anna's queenly dignity and royal majesty. It was in the separate spaces of her court that Anna displayed herself in the six masques in which she was an actual performer: the *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* in 1604 (penned by Samuel Daniel); the *Masque of Blackness* in 1605 (authored by Jonson); the *Masque of Beauty* in 1608 (Jonson); the *Masque of Queens* in 1609 (Jonson); *Tethys' Festival* in 1610 (Daniel); and *Love Freed From Ignorance and Folly* in 1611 (Jonson). These masques were primarily put on during the Christmas season and were seasonal entertainments. As noted earlier, Anna ceased to be an active performer in the court masques in 1612 (there are two explanations advanced for this, which will be discussed later). However, her involvement with masques did not stop entirely – post-1612, she adopted the role of privileged spectator, such as at Thomas Campion's *Somerset Masque* in 1613 and Robert White's *Cupid's Banishment* in 1617. It appears as though, for a time, masquing suited Anna's political and cultural goals and, far from being the ruling passion of her life, she was easily able to cease active participation in them when it no longer suited her.

Anna's involvement in *Cupid's Banishment* is of an intriguing nature.[36] This particular masque is unique as it represents a number of firsts for masques and for female performance in general. The entertainment was organized by Lucy Russell, Anna's closest friend and was performed by an all-female cast from the Ladies Hall at Deptford

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[35] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, pp. 30-34.
[36] Clare McManus, "Memorialising Anna of Denm[illegible]'s Court: *Cupid's Banishment* at Greenwich Palace," in McManus, ed., *Women and Culture*, pp. 81-99.

(the first recorded English school for girls). This masque differed from all previous ones in that it encompassed acting as well as dancing and was the first recorded instance of a woman (Anne Watkins) having a speaking part in a masque. Henrietta Maria, the next queen consort after Anna, would openly flout established conventions by having women *act* rather than merely dance in the masques that she sponsored, and it appears that, in this, she expanded upon ground work established by Anna.[37] *Cupid's Banishment* was the last known masque with which Anna was known to be involved before her death in 1619 and it appears to have been sponsored by Russell in a tribute to her friend. Interestingly, the masque was performed while James was visiting his native country of Scotland and so is the first recorded instance of a masque being solely for a female guest of honour. Her involvement in this masque, not as a performer but as a privileged observer is indicative of her ability to find effective strategies for expressing her political and cultural agenda. Anna's masquing activities (while of great importance) were not the only cultural activities with which she was involved. Anna and her ladies, especially Lady Bedford, were an extremely important political and patronage dispensing group.[38] Anna was well known to Jacobean artists as a prominent patroness, and not only of those involved with masques. As with the masques, it has been observed that "an interest in Italian culture consistently informs Anna's patronage," and this is especially visible in her architectural activities and her patronage of the Italian linguist John Florio.[39] Architecture was another oft employed mechanism for the display of status, wealth and political capital in the period and one that Anna was very involved in. Perhaps the most well-known of her building projects was the work that she undertook at Greenwich Palace, which James had given to her in 1613. Almost immediately after gaining possession of the property, Anna set about making improvements to the palace and expanding it. She decided to construct a new residence at Greenwich, which was to be called the House of Delight, but is best known by its other name of the Queen's House.

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[37] For a discussion of Henrietta Maria's dramatic activities, see Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and Court Entertainments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). See also, Caroline M. Hibbard, "The Court and Household of a Queen Consort: Henrietta Maria, 1625-1642," in Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke, eds., *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c. 1450-1650* (London: German Historical Institute, 1991). Hibbard's work deals with the consort's court of Henrietta Maria and the symbolic language that was deployed there but many of her conclusions are relevant to a discussion of Anna as well.

[38] For a discussion on the informal political power of a queen's female court circle (composed primarily of her Privy Chamber attendants), see, Elizabeth A. Brown, "Companion Me With My Mistress: Cleopatra, Elizabeth I, and Their Waiting Women," in Susan Frye and Karen Robertson, eds., *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 131-145.

[39] Knowles, " 'To Enlight the Darksome Night,' " p. 27.

For the project, Anna employed Inigo Jones, the gifted creator of many of the visual sets of her masques and the architect that she had used to refurbish Somerset House shortly after her succession, which she had renamed, by royal command, Denmark House.

The Queen's House was to be an extension of the earlier work she had done at Denmark House and was centred on the principles of Classical architecture which informed construction projects in Italy. While the Queen's House was not completed in Anna's lifetime and was used mostly by her successor Henrietta Maria, the design adhered entirely to Anna's original idea and was the first truly Classical structure erected in England. Anna also employed Jones in her refurbishment of Oatlands Palace, which was also based on Italian standards.[40] Anna and James ceased to cohabitate together, likely in 1607, and she ensured that her separate residences, the centres of her court, were suitably magnificent for one of her station. Anna viewed her architectural patronage as generating political capital in the sense that it displayed her to the public as a highly sophisticated person. She ensured that the extent of her architectural activities was well known by having her palaces and houses incorporated into the background of portraits of herself that she commissioned. Even in her architectural activities, Anna's role has traditionally been minimized by historians but a recent study notes, "the success of the revolutionary Queen's House has always been attributed to his [Inigo Jones's] artistic genius, but however great the architect…the practice of architecture is essentially collaborative. The project was initiated by Anne, and owes more to her ideas and desires than has been adequately acknowledged."[41]

Shortly after her arrival in England, Anna carried her interest in Italian culture a step further by endeavouring to learn the language. To achieve this, she employed the Italian scholar John Florio as her personal tutor.[42] Anna appears to have been very successful in her attempt and one observer noted that "she spoke the Italian language most perfectly."[43] Anna had a longstanding patron/client relationship with Florio. Florio was a fixture in Anna's court circle and was married, before her death, to the sister of

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[40] See Neville Williams, *Royal Palaces of Great Britain, From Medieval to Modern Times* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1971), p. 65.
[41] John Bold, *Greenwich: An Architectural History of the Royal Hospital for Seamen and the Queen's House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 44-45.
[42] For more information on Florio, see Frances A. Yates, *John Florio: The Life of an Italian in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934).
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 248.

Samuel Daniel.[44] In 1604 Florio was appointed a Groom of her Privy Chamber and her private secretary, posts which he was to hold until her death. Following the death of Florio's first wife he married Rose Spicer in 1617 and Anna sent a representative to the christening of their child.[45] Anna also employed Florio as an agent to purchase Italian books for her library. Prior to his involvement with Anna, Florio had published an English language dictionary in 1598 (dedicated to Lucy Russell) and, in 1611, he published it a second time. The second version was dedicated to Anna and also named after her, entitled *Queen Anna's New World of Words*.[46] Anna was also a known supporter of English expansion in America and Florio alluded to this in his dedicatory preface to Anna where he likens the exploration of a new language to the exploration of a new world and notes that, just as Isabella of Castile patronized Columbus, so Anna has patronized him in his efforts at exploration. The dedication of a text to an individual is usually an indicator of the influence and social credit of that person. Anna was the recipient of a number of dedications during her time in England and numerous Scottish works had already been (and continued to be) dedicated to her. Many were aware of Anna's cultural tastes and sought to persuade to act as a supporter by submitting their works to Anna accompanied by a dedicatory plea for her patronage. Aemilia Lanyer attempted such a strategy when she dedicated her *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* to "the Queenes most Excellent Majestie."[47] By openly displaying herself to the English populace as a patron of artists, writers, scholars, poets, and architects Anna ensured that she gained a high measure of political capital and that it was recognized that "ambitious careerists and anxious pensioners" should seek the favour of herself and her ladies.[48] In her patronage, Anna "harnessed literature and art to document and testify" to her greatness.[49] She was also an avid patroness of musicians, and a recent study has illustrated that her patronage was "crucial to the development of the lyra style" of musical

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[44] Desmond O'Connor, "John Florio," *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 166.
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 167.
[46] John Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words* (Menston: The Scolar Press, 1968 [1611: STC 1109]). For more on the production of dictionaries under female auspices in the period, see Juliet Fleming, "Dictionary English and the Female Tongue," in Jean R. Brink, ed., *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England* (Kirksville: *Sixteenth Century* Journal Publishers, 1993), pp. 175-204.
[47] Aemilia Lanyer in Susan Woods, ed., *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993 [1611: STC 15227]).
[48] Anne Somerset, *Ladies in Waiting: From the Tudors to the Present Day* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), p. 95.
[49] Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption*, p. 48.

performance.[50] This led numerous musicians working in this style to dedicate works to Anna.

Anna also harnessed the techniques of portraiture and dress in order to generate political capital for herself. She possessed a massive jewellery collection that she was continually adding to, and it is likely that it was the largest collection that had been owned by a queen consort to that date.[51] She likewise was a trendsetter in fashion and ensured that she was always attired magnificently, in a manner that augmented her royal dignity. Anna was a great patron of artists and it has been estimated that "there are more oil paintings of Anne of Denmark than of any previous English queen consort. Queen Anne was the first great royal patroness of art in England."[52] Much like her predecessor Elizabeth, Anna was intensely aware of the value of portraiture and dress as means of self-actualization and utilized them to their full potential. Anna was also a woman with sophisticated cultural and artistic tastes who appears to generally have enjoyed associating with painters and having them execute portraits of her. It was due mainly to Anna's patronage that the careers of some court painters were launched and those of others foundered. When James succeeded to the English throne, Nicholas Hilliard was high in favour at the English court and had executed numerous portraits of Elizabeth and her courtiers. James appears to have had very little interest in artists and theatre (preferring hunting and theological exercises to the cultural activities of his wife) and was barely involved in the patronage of artists. This placed Anna in a position where she could cast herself as the font of artistic and cultural patronage at the court. Royal artistic patronage in the early seventeenth-century emanated from Anna's court. Her influence was almost immediately felt by Hilliard as the Queen did not care for his work. Consequently, his career declined from 1603 onwards due to the "rival patronage of Queen Anne and Prince Henry."[53] While Hilliard's star was on the descent, Anna advanced to a position of prominence an artist whose work she enjoyed more, Isaac Oliver, whom she appointed to be her official miniaturist in 1605. Oliver was to produce

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[50] Pauline Croft, "Musique Which Pleaseth Myne Eare: Robert Cecil's Musical Patronage," in Croft, ed., *Patronage, Culture and Power*, p. 143.
[51] For information concerning Anna's jewellery collection, see Diana Scarisbrick, "Anne of Denmark's Jewellery Inventory," *Archaeologia*, 109 (1991), pp. 193-238 and John Hayward, "The Arnold Lulls Book of Jewels and the Court Jewellers of Queen Anne of Denmark," *Archaeologia*, 108 (1986), pp. 227-237, Diana Scarisbrick, "Anne of Denmark's Jewellery: The Old and the New," *Apollo*, 123 (1986), pp. 228-236.
[52] Pugh, "A Portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark," p. 174.
[53] Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), p. 126.

approximately twelve surviving portraits of Anna which were likely to have been painted from life, a number that was so high because she appears to have enjoyed sitting for her portrait.

Aside from her patronage of portrait artists, Anna was also an avid art collector – a relatively new trend in that period.[54] Along with a few of her contemporaries at court, notably Robert Cecil, Anne established a large private collection of artistic works ranging from depictions of religious scenes to landscapes. Her collection included an array of images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, St. Martha, and St. Agnes. An inventory of her belongings also indicates that she owned "seaven heads of men and women," and it is possible that this refers to sculptures.[55] She proudly displayed these works in galleries that she established at her houses, alongside portraits of her direct relations and extended family members (which included individuals in some of Europe's most illustrious dynasties).[56] She also owned and displayed portraits of members of the Tudor dynasty, such as likenesses of Elizabeth I and Henry VIII. In placing portraits of her relations and royal predecessors within her houses, Anna emphasized to observers her lineage and her importance, in addition to featuring her prominent European connections.[57] She also possessed numerous works of art not based in portraiture, including "a Italyan picture of a naked woman," and "a picture of fruites and grapes."[58] Anna's circle was aware of her love of art and occasionally made gifts to her of art works. In addition to using her houses as a place to showcase her extensive art collection, Anna also ensured that her residences were suitably magnificent in other respects. She had her coat of arms and those of her family members painted and carved onto surfaces throughout her houses and an inventory of her belongings illustrates that she possessed all the rich furnishings that would have been expected of one of her station.[59] She also exhibited her other cultural

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[54] See Stephen Orgel, "Idols of the Gallery: Becoming a Connoisseur in Renaissance England," in Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, eds., *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 251-283 and R. Malcolm Smuts, "Art and the Material Culture of Majesty in Early Stuart England," in R. Malcolm Smuts, ed., *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 86-112.

[55] M.T.W. Payne, "An Inventory of Queen Anne of Denmark's 'Ornaments, Furniture, Householde Stuffe, and Other Parcells' at Denmark House, 1619," *Journal of the History of Collections*, 13 (2001), p. 36. The inventory as it was taken in 1619 is reproduced on pp. 27-42.

[56] John Peacock, "The Politics of Portraiture," in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake, eds., *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 212.

[57] For more on Anna's artistic patronage and its political ramifications, see, Peacock, "The Politics of Portraiture," pp. 199-228.

[58] Payne, "An Inventory," p. 37.

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 27-42.

and intellectual achievements within her houses, which were themselves architectural monuments to her tastes. She had a large library, which, in addition to being stocked with a variety of works in Italian, also included a copy of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, a history of Henry IV of France, two works on the lives of the Saints, a book of poetry, a *New Testament* in French, a work on personal ornamentation and a volume entitled *A Booke in Folio of the Estates, Empires and Principalities of the Worlde* (a reflection of her interest in English expansion overseas).[60]

My purpose thus far has been to argue that, while her participation in court masques was an immensely important aspect of Anna's cultural patronage, it was not the only aspect of it. Anna was engaged in an array of artistic and cultural activities through her reign as queen consort of England, and all of them had political ramifications. While most scholars now recognize the significance of Anna's masquing activities, they have been slow to expand upon this in order to analyze her other cultural engagements. The effect has been a general picture of Anna that is rather one-sided and focuses solely on her masquing. In order to arrive at a fittingly layered understanding of Anna's importance as a cultural figure at the Stuart court, and to appreciate the political aspects of her artistic involvements, it is necessary to situate her participation in masques within the context of her other artistic patronage. By recognizing that Anna was involved with other forms of cultural expression aside from masquing, it becomes possible to surmount one of the chief obstacles encountered by scholars who focus entirely on her masquing as her chosen form of political expression: the fact that she ceased to participate actively in masques in 1612. It has been argued that Anna began her masquing activities in 1603 because the more stabilized nature of the English political scene meant that masques were the only possible form of political commentary that she had access to.

As I have shown, Anna was very active politically while she was Queen of Scotland and did not hesitate to embroil herself in the factional politics of the Scottish court. The English political landscape, however, was much more stabilised than that of Scotland, resulting in a situation where Anna's "cultural activities in England compensated for the loss of the prominent and ambitious part she had played in Scottish politics."[61] Transforming her once overtly-political actions into more transient cultural

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[60] *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[61] Pugh, "A Portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark," p. 174.

activities with political overtones thus became the only venue open to Anna at a court where she would have been otherwise marginalized. This argument formed the centre of Barroll's recent study of Anna, where he stressed, "the fact that the English court offered Anna virtually none of the same political opportunities as did Scotland was…a challenge to Anna to redefine herself, to construct another kind of visibility in accordance with new constraints."[62] Barroll goes on to suggest that the reason for Anna's cessation of masquing in 1612 was that the death of Robert Cecil in that year opened up a void at court that enabled Anna to engage again in the factional politics that she was accustomed to in Scotland. Hence, "until such time as Robert Cecil's death in 1612 weakened the political structure of governance at court, Anna turned to social and intellectual concerns."[63]

In this interpretation "Anna arrived in England isolated – a woman disenfranchised," for whom cultural activities offered an alternate venue for expression.[64] This is an argument with much to recommend it yet, Anna did continue her involvement in masquing after 1612 and she was involved in other forms of cultural activity aside from masquing in the years before 1612. While masquing represented an important political strategy for Anna, it was not the only strategy that she possessed for political effectiveness. As I will demonstrate, Anna was also not entirely absent from more explicit political action prior to 1612. Anna's upbringing had provided her with a great appreciation of the arts and it is possible that she utilized the masque so much after 1603 both because it offered her a new and potent form of political expression but also because the English court, with its greater store of wealth, provided her the opportunity to engage in a form of cultural expression that the Scottish court did not permit. It is equally possible that her cessation of active participation as a performer in masques after 1612 is attributable, in part, to her grief over the death of Henry in 1612. The Prince of Wales's death hit Anna extremely hard. The Venetian ambassador wrote "I have had audience with the Queen, to whom I did not offer condolences for the death of the Prince; I was advised to act thus, and so have other Ambassadors, because she cannot bear to hear it mentioned; nor does she ever recall it without abundant tears and sighs."[65] Anna's intense grief over her loss was evident to all and it may be that this had something to do

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[62] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 9.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[64] Gristwood, *Arbella*, p. 288.
[65] Foscarini to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. XII, April 11, 1613, p. 521.

with her desire to abstain from masquing, which Henry had also been avidly interested in, performing his own court masques with Jones and Jonson in imitation of those staged by his mother. For Anna the loss may simply have been too fresh for her to bear, for an elegist for Henry noted, "never sorrow nearer touch't a QUEENE."[66]

Scholars have also argued that Anna ended her active participation because she had become so unimportant politically by 1612 that even the masques had ceased to be effective as a form of political expression. Barbara Lewalski argues that the reason for Anna's cessation of masquing in 1612 was a reflection of the fact that she was becoming increasingly unimportant as a political and cultural entity at her husband's court. Lewalski argues that, previous to this, Anna had avidly utilized masquing as "a vehicle for self-affirmation and for subversive intervention in Jacobean politics."[67] This argument is debatable on a number of levels. Firstly, the masques that Anna staged were intended to glorify the monarchy and the royal courts and, while some of her masques certainly invited criticisms on the grounds of propriety, it is doubtful that they were ever openly subversive or overtly critical of her husband's regime. It is difficult to accept Lewalski's argument that "the Queen's oppositional stance offered a patently subversive royal example to the Jacobean patriarchal culture."[68] Likewise, her suggestion that Anna was almost entirely marginalized by 1612 is debatable. Anna operated within her own sphere of influence as a patron, separate from that of her husband, and she was certainly not marginalized within these spaces. Also, some of Anna's most effective political activities occurred after 1612 when she was a prominent member of court factions and her contemporaries certainly thought it worthwhile to cultivate her support (something they surely would not have done had she been entirely without influence).

Both of these explanations for Anna's utilization of the masque and her eventual rejection of it are not entirely satisfying. Part of the reason for this lies in the fact that both present a one-sided view of Anna that does not allow for the recognition that her political and cultural activities intermingled throughout her life. Anna was both politically and culturally involved before 1612 and the same is true of the years after 1612. While her cultural activities prior to 1612 are certainly more visible than her

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[66] Thomas Campion, "Songs of Mourning: Bewailing the Untimely Death of Prince Henry," in Walter R. Davis, ed. *The Works of Thomas Campion: Complete Songs, Masques, and Treatises With a Selection of the Latin* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), p. 121.
[67] Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, p. 15.
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

political activities and the reverse is true for the years after 1612, her activities did not operate within a simple dichotomy of political *or* cultural. Rather, she was involved in both forms of expression throughout her career and, often, her cultural activities had a political dimension while her political activities had cultural overtones. Having examined Anna's cultural activities in England, it is now necessary to move to an analysis of her political activities during this period. The goal of this will be to demonstrate that Anna's career was more complex and politically effective than many historians have previously argued and that viewing it solely through her cultural activities while queen of England does not offer a sufficiently layered and comprehensive understanding of her as a competent political actor at the Jacobean court. During her time in Scotland, Anna demonstrated a level of political involvement that many earlier historians would find startling. It has been observed, however, that after Anna moved south in 1603, her political activities ceased to be as explicit as they were in Scotland and began to be expressed through cultural mediums, at least until 1612. While it is certainly true that Anna's engagement in masquing and other acts of cultural patronage were surely more pronounced than her overtly political actions before 1612, this is not to imply that she was altogether absent from outright political involvement during her first nine years as queen consort of England. Anna's participation in masquing and her patronage of artists, writers, and architects were not simply pleasure activities that she undertook in order to please her own aesthetic sense of beauty. It is better to see them as political deeds expressed through cultural means. Aside from these cultural undertakings, Anna was also involved in direct political action from 1603 until 1619, much as she was involved in both cultural activities (with indirect political overtones) and blatantly political activities during her time in Scotland. In referring to the tendency of many historians to deny that Anna was politically involved in England except as it was culturally expressed, Louis Roper fittingly questions, "she had been a major political player in Scotland, why should the leopard have changed her spots in England?"[69] In a study of Anna's career as queen consort, it is unnecessary to discuss her in terms of polarities, engaging only with her political actions or her cultural actions. In actuality, there was an overlap between these two spheres of Anna's involvement and it is possible

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[69] Roper, "Unmasquing the Connections Between Jacobean Politics and Policy," p. 48.

to discuss her operating as a political agent while simultaneously acting as a cultural agent.

Chapter 5: Political Influence at the Jacobean Court: Anna of Denmark and Political Engagement

Shortly after Anna's arrival in England she established herself both as an influential patron of the arts and a valuable political ally. Throughout her time in England she was the recipient of numerous petitions from members of the court and gentry in the localities seeking her insistence in a variety of matters. Dorothy Stewart, in a series of undated letters, appealed to James, Charles and Anna for the remittance of an unspecified debt on the part of her husband James Stewart. She made one appeal each to James and Charles but petitioned Anna three times for assistance and this is indicative that she certainly felt that Anna had a large measure of influence when it came to her husband and his actions.[1] The papers of Robert Cecil are peppered throughout with references to suits and petitions being deferred to Anna and the Queen's active involvement in the resolution of disputes arising among tenants on her estates – offering her support to certain petitioners while blocking others.[2] Lady Arbella Stuart, in her standing difficulties with James, also found it advisable to petition Anna to intercede with the King on her behalf. In October of 1610 she sent to Anna a copy of the petition that she was submitting to James and asked for Anna's mediation in the situation.[3] Sir Walter Raleigh, who found himself in even more hot water with James than Arbella, also thought it wise to seek Anna's help when it came to trying to convince the King to endorse his disastrous Guiana venture.[4] Indeed, Anna and Henry were admirers of Raleigh and Anna was constantly attempting to persuade James to revise his opinions regarding Raleigh, although (in this case) her efforts met with little success. Raleigh recommended remedies to Anna for her son Henry during his last illness and Anna was always deeply appreciative of his input. Raleigh was a prodigious writer and Anna enjoyed his works and sought to cultivate his creativity as she did with other individuals whom she patronized culturally. Although Raleigh would eventually be executed by James due to his supposed involvement in a plot against the King in 1603, the fact that the death sentence placed upon him at the beginning of James's English reign was not actually

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[1] *Report on the Manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland Preserved at Welbeck Abbey* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1923), vol. IX, pp. 153-155.
[2] See the *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable Marquis of Salisbury* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1976), 24 volumes.
[3] Arbella Stuart to Anna, in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, vol. VIII, 1610, p. 639.
[4] Walter Raleigh to Anna, in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, vol. IX, 1611, p. 105.

carried out until 1618 suggests that Anna's attempts to secure his release may not have been entirely ineffective. Anna also endeavoured to improve the fortunes of Lord Justice Coke when he was out of favour with James. While many other courtiers withdrew their favour from Coke, Anna and Charles remained his supporters. John Chamberlain noted in 1616 that, "the Lord Cooke hangs still in suspence, and his best frends feare he wilbe totally eclipsed, yet the Queene is said to stand firme for him, and to have ben very earnest in his behalf, as likewise the Prince."[5] One of Anna's ladies, who had been in her service since 1603, was Lady Elizabeth Hatton, who was married to Coke. While the marriage was a rocky one (the pair quarrelled bitterly over Coke's usurpation of her pre-marital property as the widow of Sir William Hatton), Anna likely extended her support to Coke due to her friendship with his wife.[6] Anna's involvement in factional politics frequently displayed her determination to offer support to those whom she regarded as her friends in the face of all opposition. Her dogged determination to support her friends made her a valuable political ally, one whose loyalty could be depended upon.

Anna also offered assistance to Lady Anne Clifford, also in direct opposition to James's policies. During a protracted dispute over land between Clifford and her deceased husband's relations, when she had appealed to James and he appeared on the verge of denying her claim, Clifford reported in her diary that, "upon the 18th being Saturday, I went presently after Dinner to the Queen to the Drawing Chamber where my Lady Derby told the Queen how my Business stood and that I was to go to the King; so she promised me she would do all the good in it she could."[7] Clifford went on to write "the Queen gave me a warning not to trust my matters absolutely to the King lest he should deceive me."[8] It appears that, in this case, Anna was more than willing to offer her support as a political ally to individuals, even if it meant going against James's policies. In this respect, Anna showed herself to be a competent and willing political agent, fully aware of the possible negative consequences of her actions. Indeed, Clifford recalled near her death that Anna did "admonishe mee to persist in my denyall of trusting my cause concerning my lands of Inheritance to her husband King James' award."[9]

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[5] Chamberlain to Carleton., in Norman Egbert McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society*, 1939), vol. II, November 9, 1616, p. 32.
[6] Hatton and Coke later fell out over Coke's scheme to wed their daughter to George Villiers's brother. Lady Hatton resorted to hiding her daughter and Coke, in turn, obtained a warrant for the child's return.
[7] Clifford, *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford*, 1617, p. 45.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.*, 1676, p. 240.

Aside from these three notable petitions to Anna from high-profile members of the aristocracy, the State Papers Domestic from James's reign are filled with references to appeals, petitions, and requests for favour that were sent to Anna from individuals that constituted a wide spectrum of the governing class. Clearly she was not inactive politically; if she had been, she would have been a most inappropriate person to continually petition.

Petitions were also presented to Anna through the Queen's Court of Chancery, also known as Her Majesty's Court at Westminster. This court had been used by Henry VIII's queens consort but, following the death of Katherine Parr, the lapse in the position of queen meant that it was not extensively developed by 1603. It was in nature principally a financial court as opposed to a judicial one and it addressed matters relating to the lands settled on Anna as queen of England. In this capacity it occasionally addressed legal matters presented by the tenants on those lands. Because Anna established a uniquely independent household from that of her husband, it was necessary for her to possess highly developed and autonomous financial institutions in order to manage her estate and it was in this context that her Court of Chancery should be viewed. Under Anna it began to develop as an important institution that was necessary for the maintenance of her self-sufficient household. Anna began the process of expanding this court and her successor, Henrietta Maria, continued it so that it became an integral fiscal unit for the queen consort.[10] As noted earlier, Anna was also a supporter of English overseas expansion and she threw her support behind others in favour of it at court. She was especially dedicated to the survival of the Jamestown colony and the continuation of the Virginia Company. To support their efforts toward the foundation of colonies in the Americas, Anna assisted in the production of a 1617 masque entitled *A Vision of Desire*, which presented an image of the benefits of colonization through allegorical language.[11] As was the case with *Cupid's Banishment*, this masque with its political message was staged while James was absent in Scotland, suggesting that Anna's political audience was not confined solely to her husband.

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[10] For a fuller analysis of the Queen's Court of Chancery, see N.R.R. Fisher, "The Queenes Courte in Her Councell at Westminster," *The English Historical Review*, 108 (1993), pp. 314-337.

[11] Roper, "Unmasquing the Connections Between Jacobean Politics and Policy," p. 45. Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford, also shared Anna's support for colonial expansion and engaged in patronage activities that expressed that support. See Payne, "Lucy Russell," p. 321.

In furthering her support for English expansion, Anna also extended her patronage to the political polemicist William Welwood. Anna supported a variety of texts authored by Welwood that dealt with maritime law and argued for the overseas expansion of England. She likewise was a supporter of Raleigh's urgings of the wealth that were to be found in areas that were currently in Spanish overseas territories. Anna also personally commissioned Welwood to write a text dealing with maritime law as it concerned offshore fishing. She likely did this because she possessed a monopoly on offshore fishing licenses and wanted to ensure that this lucrative source of funds would remain within her control.[12] In this attempt to ensure the survival of areas in which she had an economic interest, Anna was clearly acting as a political agent. In addition to her vested concern with fishing licenses, Anna also lent her support to some of her husband's economic ventures, such as his attempt to create a national silk industry. James, beginning in 1609, entered into a venture to breed and farm silkworms in England and, although it ultimately ended in failure due to climate conditions, up until 1611 it was producing favourable results.[13] Silk was truly a luxury item in England at this juncture and was increasingly more expensive to obtain. The English government had been attempting to establish a national industry for many years before James's accession, but it was the Jacobean government that ultimately made the first committed attempts to achieve this. In support of her husband's economic scheme, Anna commissioned a portrait of herself wearing a gown that was decorated with silkworms and mulberry leaves and also lent her support as a patron to authors who began turning out instruction manuals on silkworm farming.[14] Anna also supported this venture in a more practical way by having a brick silkworm house constructed for her in the middle of a large mulberry garden at Oatlands palace, where she had Inigo Jones at work on an array of architectural improvements.[15] It can only be assumed that her efforts to farm the silkworms on her estates met with failure, yet it is significant that she was attempting to generate increased revenues for herself and was acting as an "improving" landowner.

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[12] J.D. Alsop, "William Welwood, Anne of Denmark and the Sovereignty of the Sea," *Scottish Historical Review*, 59 (1980), pp. 171-174.

[13] For a full account of English attempts at national silk production (and the underlying reasons behind these attempts) in the period, see Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

[14] Pugh, "A Portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark," pp. 170-171.

[15] Williams, *Royal Homes of Great Britain*, p. 65.

Anna was also involved with state affairs during her tenure as queen consort. Kings had often invested governing authority in their wives during an absence; the last example of this in England had been when Henry VIII had appointed his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, to the position of regent during his martial campaign in France at the beginning of the reign and had appointed his last wife, Katherine Parr, to a council of regency during his second martial campaign in France at the end of his reign. This custom was continued in 1617 when James appointed Anna to the council of regency that was to rule in his stead while he visited his first kingdom. Although supreme power over the council was invested in Sir Francis Bacon, it is nonetheless significant that Anna was given a place on it. Some historians, working within the traditional historiographical stance that characterizes Anna as a politically incompetent, have argued that James, recognizing her ineptitude, actively excluded her from all political spheres. However, the fact that Anna was a member of the most important governing body during his absence suggests that his attempts to exclude her from politics may not have been as all-encompassing as others have suggested. Although Anna was not the foremost member of the council, she was certainly regarded by many as one of its most important and influential members. As James's queen, Anna was entitled to a certain degree of deference on the part courtiers and ministers and, during the King's absence, many appear to have believed that Anna was the real, although unofficial, power in the realm. Thus, while the king was away, courtiers flocked to Anna and "the political centre of England shifted to Anna's palace at Greenwich."[16] The other members of the six-person group included George Abbott, Archbishop of Canterbury, Prince Charles, the Earl of Worcester, Sir Francis Bacon (in his capacity as Lord Keeper and later Lord Chancellor), and Sir Thomas Howard (the Lord Treasurer) and it was noted that the council met frequently at Greenwich in order to ensure that Anna was involved with its business.[17]

Another area in which Anna expressed her political opinions was over the issue of her children's marriages. Much discussion in previous works has been given to the extent to which Anna involved herself in the negotiations over Henry's marriage and continually pushed for a match with Spain or one of the other Hapsburg governed nations. Many writers have taken this is as proof of her lack of political tact, suggesting

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[16] Roper, "Unmasquing the Connections Between Jacobean Politics and Policy," p. 51.
[17] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark, Queen of England*, p. 153. See also, Giovanni Battista Lionello to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. XIV, 1617, p. 411.

that she allowed her personal preferences for Spain to overrule her concern for her children's futures. While it is true that, for a period, Anna was a Hapsburg supporter, it is also true that she later changed her allegiance on this score due to her factional alignment against the Howard clan (of which more will be said later), who were avidly pro-Spanish. In this sense, the French ambassador was able to report that she "was not so perfect a Spaniard as was believed."[18] Indeed, it was James, after Anna's death, who allowed his kind feeling towards the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, to influence his political actions. James's involvements with Spain were much more pronounced than those of Anna, yet it is often upon her door that the most virulent criticisms in this regard have been laid by historians. Initially, Anna was a great supporter of Spain and an episode wherein she used the politics of the court masque to express her favour for Spain over France has already been recalled. In an incident in 1607, Anna further illustrated her support for the Hapsburgs by refusing, in her position as queen, to receive the ambassadors sent to the court by the Netherlands (who had rebelled against Hapsburg rule and formed an independent state). John Chamberlain recorded the incident, saying,

> the States tooke theyre leave yesterday. The Quene was not there though she were assuredly looked for, neither can there be any other reason imagined of her fayling but theyre presence. They have not yet seene her nor can get accesse though they have sought yt more than once. In all other thinges they speed well enough, insomuch that the Spanish ambassador is redy to burst to see them so graced.[19]

Anna was well aware of the ceremonial importance of the reception of ambassadors and did not shy away from using the occasion to make a clear declaration of her disapproval of the States General. It was also reported that she often spoke out publicly against the States and its policies.[20] While many English people, raised on the Armada legend, may have found Anna's behaviour in this matter objectionable, it is important to remember that, in her initial support for Spain, Anna, not being English born, did not necessarily view hating that nation as her patriotic duty and she was also related to many members of the Hapsburg family, both by marriage and blood. It is also likely that Anna, who was always highly conscious of her own regality and impeccable dynastic pedigree, simply felt that the Hapsburg house was one of the few European

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[18] Sully, *Memoirs*, p. 233.
[19] Chamberlain to Carleton., in *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, vol. I, July 20, 1607, p. 245.
[20] Lionello to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. XIV, 1616, p. 284.

houses with sufficient dignity and prestige for her children to marry into. This sense of familial pride also seems to have been behind her initial objections over the marriage of her daughter Elizabeth to Frederick, Elector Palatine (a marriage which was, incidentally to prove a disaster and ended with Elizabeth being forced into exile by her husband's rebellious subjects). John Chamberlain reported that the Queen was very much against the match and had exchanged terse words with her daughter over it. Anna, however, realized the futility of her objections and eventually granted her blessing to the match and Chamberlain reported that "the Quene that seemed not to taste yt so well at first, is since so come about that she doth all she can to grace yt."[21] Anna, just as when she offered support to petitioners, appears to have had no difficulties with asserting herself politically, even if it was in opposition to the policies of other court groupings. Likewise, far from stubbornly and foolishly adhering to her agenda in the face of all opposition, she showed herself to be more than capable of shifting her positions and navigating the complicated waters of factional court politics.

The extent to which Anna was politically involved in England both before and after 1612 was some times questioned by observers, especially those from foreign courts. The Venetian ambassador, perhaps anxious to slot Anna into the proper and idealized role of submissive wife, wrote that "she is intelligent and prudent; and knows the disorders of the government, in which she has no part, though many hold that as the King is most devoted to her, she might play as large a role as she wished."[22] While this seems to suggest that this particular ambassador did not view the Queen as having much of a political role, he wrote in the same dispatch and "she is full of kindness for those who support her, but on the other hand, she is terrible, proud, unendurable to those she dislikes."[23] Another ambassador noted that "as the King is extremely attached to her, she succeeds in all she attempts."[24] Whether or not they acknowledged that Anna was politically involved, her contemporaries perceived her as an individual capable of influence and had the potential to be successful as a political agent. While all of these examples can be, and have often been, interpreted ambiguously as indicators of Anna's political involvement, her alliance with the anti-Howard faction within court politics and her part in the orchestration of the downfall of one of its most key members, Robert Carr,

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[21] Chamberlain to Ralph Winwood in *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, vol. I, February 23, 1613, p. 427.
[22] Nicolo Mollin to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. X, 1607, p. 513.
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers*, vol. X, July 23, 1603, p. 68.

Earl of Somerset, is undeniable. Aside from all her other actions, it is this incident which definitely illustrates that Anna was an active participant in factional politics and a capable political agent in her own right.

Since his teenage years, James I had developed close bonds with a series of male favourites and, as soon as he was in a position to do so, had advanced them to important positions within his household. James's close bonds with these men, and his penchant for openly showering them with affection, have been the basis for suggestions of his homosexuality, although contemporaries never linked the two. While the King's involvements with his male favourites often proved contentious in the bitter factional strife that dominated in Scotland (the fortunes of Esmé Stuart, James's first great favourite, are testament to this), Anna and his closest advisors appear to have been generally accepting of these relationships and did not view the favourites with any especial enmity. Indeed, Anna was in a position to exert a great deal of control over the favourites that James's selected – the King refused to advance any of them within his household unless the Queen had given her formal approval. Anna's acceptance and toleration of James's favourites was, however, to end with Robert Carr. Anna had known Carr when he was a young page in James's Scottish household. During this time, Carr appears as a clumsy and unsophisticated youth who was dismissed from the King's service due to his ineptitude and "abysmal failure in saying grace in Latin."[25] Following this, Carr spent a period in France and returned to the English court sometime before 1607 a cultured and, outwardly, sophisticated gentleman. It was during a tournament before the royal family at Whitehall in 1607 that Carr first captured the King's attention with his prowess on the field and impeccably charming good manners in front of the King. Carr's display in front of James came at an opportune time when the King was beginning to tire of his current favourites, Lord Hay and Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery. Carr initially presented himself to the King as an individual who was extremely malleable to the royal will, fawning upon the King and behaving obediently to him in all situations. This type of behaviour particularly impressed James and he soon began to behave toward Carr as a surrogate father, even endeavouring to instruct him in Latin.[26]

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[25] Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, p. 133. Williams suggests that Carr's dismissal was due to Anna and that, because of this, Carr bore a grudge against her for the rest of his life.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

James began to entrust more and more power in Carr and attempted to instruct him in statecraft so that he could become one of James's ministers. By the end of 1607, Carr's position in the King's favour was secure as the King kept him always close and continued to invest greater responsibilities in him. Carr however, despite his great ambitions to power, was in over his head. He appears to have had little grasp of the skills necessary to carry out the tasks that James had given to him, and even less of an inclination to acquire them. Rather than dedicating himself to learning the complexities of early modern governance, Carr instead allied himself to one of his old friends, Thomas Overbury. Overbury was an intelligent, ambitious courtier with a degree from Oxford and a skilled writer. Overbury became Carr's secretary and, essentially, Carr passed to him for completion all of the jobs that James had entrusted to Carr. This arrangement allowed Overbury to satisfy his ambitions while simultaneously granting Carr greater amounts of time to spend close to James, further entrenching himself in the King's councils. When Robert Cecil, James's chief minister and Principal Secretary of State, died in 1612, the post passed unofficially to Carr, in effect placing both him and Overbury in positions of extreme control and influence over state affairs. As Carr became more and more indispensable to James, Overbury became ever more indispensable to Carr and his arrogance grew apace. Anna no doubt was angered by the level of influence over James that the pair had, but what she really found unendurable, however, was that both afforded her scant respect.

As has been discussed, Queen Anna was a woman intensely conscious of her royal dignity and one can imagine that she watched Overbury and Carr rise to power with misgivings. However, her feelings changed from mere dislike to open hostility and antagonism following an incident that occurred in 1611. In that year, the Queen was with her husband at Greenwich when, through a window, she saw Carr and Overbury walking on the grounds below, deep in conversation. The Queen said something loudly out the window to the two men, to which Overbury responded with a laugh. It is probable that Overbury's laugh was directed at something that the two men were discussing and had nothing to do with the Queen, but Anna interpreted it as aimed at her – an affront to her royal status and the respect that it entailed. Anna went immediately to James and tried to have the men punished for their insolence. James, however, was unwillingly to censure Carr, but unaware of Carr's reliance on Overbury was willing to punish him with

dismissal. So, "the conclusion was, she finding herself not able to supplant Carr, which she desireth of all things in the world, turned all her force against Overbury, against whom she hath so far prevailed that he is banished from the Court."[27] Overbury, likely due to Carr's efforts on his behalf, was soon readmitted to Court, but further conflicts with Anna arose. In 1612, Anna discovered that Sir David Wood, a member of her household, had been obliged to pay Carr and Overbury £1200 in order for a suit that he had presented to the King to be granted. The Queen was furious at their presumption and launched into a fresh series of complaints before James. As in 1611, James was reticent to act against Carr (whom he had recently made Viscount Rochester), but Overbury, sensing that he again would be singled out for punishment (a stint in the Tower was threatened) voluntarily retired from Court and journeyed to the Continent for five months.[28]

Carr's unpopularity grew, because he was both a foreigner and because the position of royal favourite usually earns one few friends (except for the monarch), but he was soon to become involved in a series of events which would destroy his reputation. In 1612, Carr began a romance with Lady Frances Howard, Countess of Essex, a married gentlewoman and a prominent member of the important and politically influential Howard faction – the grouping that was in direct conflict with Anna's faction. The Howards (a triumvirate consisting of Thomas Howard, Frances's father and Earl of Suffolk (later to be dismissed from his post as Lord Treasurer on charges of embezzlement), Lord Howard of Effingham, and Henry Howard, Earl of Northhampton) and their supporters were a Catholic faction and were avid supporters of a Spanish alliance for England. Anna, despite her earlier fondness for Spain and her suspected Catholicism, had aligned herself from 1603 onwards with the militantly Protestant and anti-Spanish Essex grouping that had survived from Elizabeth's reign. Her closest friends and household members were from this faction and their opposition to the Howards was to contribute greatly to Carr's fall from favour. In her alignment with this factional grouping, in spite of its divergence from her own personal beliefs, Anna demonstrated her political flexibility and her willingness to harness the "informal power

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[27] Mr. Taverner to William Turnbull in 1611, in A.B. Hinds, ed., *Manuscripts of the Marquis of Downshire Preserved at East Hampstead Park, Berks* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1938), vol. III, p. 83.
[28] Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, p. 137.

of the court faction," to advance her own agenda.[29] Frances, by all reports a very attractive woman, was married to Robert Dereveux, Earl of Essex (the son of Elizabeth's ill-fated final favourite) when she began her liaison with Carr. Both James and Anna had been present at their glittering wedding, but Frances treated her husband with barely concealed disdain and would have little to do with him. In 1612, when Henry Howard, the leader of the Howard clan, saw that Carr and his niece were in love, he perceived an opportunity to advance his family's control and aided the couple in their indiscretion. Desiring to bring Carr into the Howard's orbit of influence, Howard encouraged Frances to consult astrologers about her future with her husband and supported her when she sought an annulment with Devereux based on his alleged impotence. Frances's divorce from her husband provoked a scandal in England. It was widely known that she was consorting with Carr and many found the idea that, after years of marriage, Devereux had suddenly become impotent hard to swallow. To most, it seemed that the grounds for a divorce were baseless and that Frances was little more than an adulteress, manipulating and dishonouring the institution of matrimony to satisfy her own lasciviousness.

James, however, was still devoted to Carr and, seeing his love for Frances, essentially allowed himself to become embroiled in the divorce proceedings and commanded the English clerics in charge of considering the evidence for an annulment to find in favour of Frances. The outrage that many felt regarding the King's conduct in this affair was palpable and James's reputation took a serious hit. Yet, in the end, Frances's marriage was annulled and she and Carr were married. Overbury was also dissatisfied with Carr's involvement with Frances. While the divorce proceedings were still underway, he spoke out openly against Frances and alienated himself from Carr. Overbury correctly perceived that, once married to a Howard, Carr would fall under their influence and his own position would be drastically undermined. In the event, this was exactly what happened, much to Anna's delight. To dispose of Overbury, James, no doubt urged on by the Howards, attempted to offer him a post as an ambassador to Muscovy, the Low Countries or France.[30] Foolishly, Overbury refused in a typically insolent manner and this sealed his fate. Anna long had been convinced that Overbury had nothing but contempt for her and James now believed that he was disrespectful towards the monarch, an unforgivable sin. In April of 1613, shortly before Carr and

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[29] Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption*, p. 53.
[30] Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, p. 141.

Frances married, Overbury was committed to the Tower, where, over the course of five months, he was poisoned at Frances Howard's instigation after she had bribed the Lieutenant of the Tower.[31]

While Carr may initially have been happy to be rid of his former friend, the discovery of Overbury's murder was to end his career at Court. Before his marriage to Frances, James had made Carr Earl of Somerset and Carr's arrogance, always pronounced, had become inflated to an intolerable degree. He began to treat Anna openly with disdain and, fatally, he abandoned his previous strategy of appearing to defer to James in all things. Carr dared to engage in outbursts of temper in front of James and the King, his feelings no doubt reinforced by Anna's supportive suggestions, began to withdraw his favour from Carr. Carr's alignment with the Howards, Anna's factional enemies, the Queen and her supporters were in the position to kill two birds with one stone, so to speak. By bringing down Carr, Anna could rid herself both of her old enemy and his Howard supporters. It was a unique opportunity and one that Anna took full advantage of. Arthur Wilson, in a work written after Anna's death, asserted that Carr was "not very acceptable to the Queen," and "she became the head of a great Faction against him."[32] It is significant that Wilson labels Anna as not only a member of the anti-Howard faction, but actually as its head. Anna and her allies came to the decision that Carr had to be removed from the King, taking the Howards with him. While James's favour for Carr was slipping, it was far from destroyed and the Essex faction realized that the only sure way to oust Carr was to supplant him with a new favourite that they selected. Anna, despite her eagerness to destroy Carr was, by this point, understandably reluctant to place her trust in any of James's favourites and was no longer inclined to view them as benign aspects of James's life – after her experiences with Carr and Overbury, she perceived favourites as a direct threat to her interests. Her faction, at the behest of George Abbott, Archbishop of Canterbury, had selected George Villiers as Carr's replacement and set about to persuade Anna to offer her influential support to the

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[31] For a detailed analysis of the Overbury murder (incidentally, one which argues that Anna was recruited by the pro-Villiers faction rather than being an active and early member of it) see, Anne Somerset, *Unnatural Murder: Poison at the Court of King James I* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997).

[32] Arthur Wilson, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James I, Relating to What Passed From His First Access to the Crown, to His Death* (London: Printed for Richard Lownds, 1653 [STC Wing 2888]), p. 79.

young man.[33] Initially, she refused on the grounds that, while Villiers may have been malleable to their will at that point, once he was firmly entrenched in James's affections he would prove no better than Carr. Nonetheless, the scheme moved forward and Villiers did indeed attract James, although his progress in gaining the King's absolute favour was disappointingly slow overall.

Anna was still reluctant to offer her support but, in 1614, her rage against the Howards and Carr was intensified after Carr was appointed Lord Chamberlain over her own candidate for the position, her factional ally and close friend, the Earl of Pembroke. Archbishop Abbott intensified his efforts to gain Anna's support. Again, she declined in a letter where she wrote,

> I know your master better than you all; if Villiers get once into his favour, those who shall have most contributed to his preferment will be the first sufferers by him. I shall be no more spared than the rest. The young proud favourite will fancy that he is obliged to nobody for his preferment.[34]

Abbott continued his pleas, however, and Anna was eventually convinced that this was indeed the most effective way to bring down Carr and the Howards. In 1615 she used her influence to persuade James to knight Villiers and make him a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, a post that entailed very close proximity to the King and would give Villiers the opportunity to win James's favour. Villiers was much more tactful than Carr and, at least until Anna's death, did not turn on his factional supporters. He moved slowly in his efforts to supplant Carr and always maintained a good relationship with Anna and Abbott. Anna and Villiers began to exchange friendly letters and she affectionately dubbed him "her kind dog" and gave him advice on how to conduct himself in James's presence. With time, Villiers did earn both James's favour and Carr's hatred. James was still unwilling to abandon Carr and his Howard supporters and the two competitors for the King's favour often bickered openly, to James's great distress. Carr, however, was unable to oust Villiers and, in early 1615, his own career was shattered when his and Frances's involvement in Overbury's death was exposed.

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[33] For biographical information of George Villiers and an analysis of his political career, see, Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham, 1592-1628* (London: Longman, 1981).

[34] Williams, *Anne of Denmark*, p. 170.

Initially, there was no suspicion of murder when Overbury had died in the Tower. However, Carr's enemies at Court had heard rumours of poison and these were brought prominently to the fore when an apothecary's boy in Flushing made a deathbed confession that he had been involved in a plot to murder Overbury. Early on, the lesser participants in the affair were arrested, tried and executed. Included among their number was Frances Howard's confidant Mrs. Turner and Gervase Elwes, the Lieutenant of the Tower.[35] While Frances and Carr were spared at the outset, it was inevitable that suspicion should fall on them. The pair was already unfavourable due to their behaviour during Frances's first marriage. She was a hated woman already viewed as an adulteress; it was not a far jump before she was publicly labelled a murderess and a witch.[36] In 1616, Carr and Frances were tried for their involvement in Overbury's death and both were convicted. While neither faced execution or long term imprisonment, Carr's career and the Howards' influence was ended. Anna and her faction were victorious in their efforts to unseat Carr. In this affair, Anna demonstrated many of the political skills that she had first displayed in Scotland. Far from being peripheral to Carr's fall, she had been an active participant in his removal. She showed herself to be a skilled political agent, more than capable of engaging in factional politics with the same ability that she had previously displayed in Scotland.

Aside from all her other political involvements during her time as queen consort of England, this was both the most dramatic example of her political agency and her last large-scale political action before her death less than three years later. In terms of the factional alignments against Carr, Anna's position was of "significance and complexity."[37] It is clear that she was an active player in the series of events that led to Carr's downfall and her role should not be underestimated. Anna's actions in this respect directly challenge the traditional interpretation that "after she became queen consort of England, she sedulously avoided all state business."[38] It is of some interest to note that Anna does not seem to have viewed Frances Howard with the same vehemence with

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[35] For a brilliant analysis of Anne Turner's involvement in the Overbury murder, written with reference to Goffman's theories of roles and the presentation of self, see Ryan, *Mistris Turner's Tale*.
[36] For an analysis of the potent gender stereotypes and characterizations that were wrapped up in the Overbury affair, see David Underdown, "Yellow Ruffs and Poisoned Possets: Placing Women in Early Stuart Political Debate," in Susan D. Amussen and Adele Seef, eds., *Attending to Early Modern Women* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998), pp. 230-243 and Ryan, *Mistris Turner's Tale*.
[37] David Lindley, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 84.
[38] Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, p. 146.

which she regarded Robert Carr. While Frances was Countess of Essex, Anna had invited her to be a dancer in two of her masques and this suggests that the Queen may have had a certain amount of liking and affection for Frances. While Anna expressed her disapproval of Frances' efforts to secure an annulment, she also interceded on her behalf with James during her trial for her involvement with Overbury's death. Indeed, Anna's efforts proved to be successful as Frances was treated gently at her trial and later pardoned for her crimes.[39]

[39] Barroll, *Anna of Denmark*, p. 210, n. 75.

Chapter 6: "She May Have Engraven Upon Her Monument a Character of Virtue": Posthumous Images of Anna

The final glimpses offered of Anna as both a potent cultural influence and an adept and willing political player were posthumous ones. The value of viewing Anna as a political actor and recognizing that this was how her contemporaries perceived her can be seen in the ceremonial of her funeral and a series of published tracts that valorised her cultural and political importance. The final years of Anna's life in England were ones in which her health (which, by all reports, had been quite good throughout most of her life), declined rapidly. In 1612 she had been diagnosed by the royal physicians with an ulcerated leg, gout, and "flowing menses."[1] She retired to Hampton Court in September of 1618 during a bout of illness and never left. By late February, her condition had worsened considerably and she died on March 2, 1619 of dropsy and consumption. Before her death, Anna had made her final confession to Archbishop Abbott and had spoken with her son, Prince Charles. As she neared the end, however, she had dismissed everyone from her chamber and closeted herself with her Danish servant, also named Anna, who had been in her service since she had first journeyed to Scotland as James's wife. Sir Dudley Carleton, writing to John Chamberlain, noted that Anna apparently had died intestate, but had committed orally all of her belongings to Charles.[2] It was also reported that the Danish Anna, after the Queen's passing, had stolen many pieces from her vast jewellery collection and fled. Yet, it is possible, as the Queen died without a formal will, that she had verbally promised some of her jewels to her maid, in appreciation for her long years of service.

The Venetian ambassador, while asserting that Anna's death would "not make the slightest difference in the government of the kingdoms," lamented her death in his dispatch to the Doge and Senate.[3] Foscarini wrote "this loss should grieve your Serenity owing to the love which the queen bore for the republic and for the confidential way with which she dealt with our ambassadors."[4] Foscarini's words provide a shrewd assessment of Anna's political activities, one that would be consonant with the political experiences of other early modern elite women. The role that Anna's played was one that was

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[1] Meikle and Payne, "Anne of Denmark," p. 198.
[2] Carleton to Chamberlain, in *Carleton to Chamberlain*, March 6, 1619, pp. 219-221.
[3] Foscarini to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. XV, March 14, 1619, pp. 494-495.
[4] *Ibid.*

typically performed offstage, so to speak. As a woman, no matter how elevated her status, she was denied access to the official channels of political power at court. Yet, she wielded potent influence on an informal level. Availing herself of the language of ritual and symbology and accessing the important web of court patronage, Anna equipped herself with a means and a medium through which she could express her political agenda. Her political actions were not performed on a public and highly visible stage; rather she usually worked on an informal level that was effective nonetheless. At times she openly engaged in the jostling of factional politics (most notably during the advancement of Villiers and while queen consort of Scotland), her activities were largely within the repertoire of forms of political expression that were open to aristocratic women surrounding the court.

Anna had been a popular queen and her death was mourned by her contemporaries. Sir Gerard Herbert wrote approvingly of her "the Queen is much lamented, having benefited many and injured none; she died most willingly, and was more comely in death than ever in life."[5] It was reported that a comet was seen in the sky shortly after Anna's death, an event that was taken to portend coming disastrous events or the death of a famous personage. The Parliamentarian Arthur Wilson, in his scandalous polemical history of James's reign, wrote that

> the Common People, who naturally admire their Princes, placing them in a Region above ordinary Mortals, thought this great Light in Heaven was sent as a Flambeau to her Funeral; their dark minds not discovering, while this Blaze was burning the fire of War that broke out in Bohemia, wherein many thousands perished.[6]

While Wilson attributed the appearance of the comet to the war in Bohemia, the nation of which Anna's daughter Elizabeth was queen, others felt that it was related to Anna's passing. In his collection of historical events and chronicles, penned many years after Anna's death, John Rushworth wrote, "Queen Anne died this year at Hampton Court…the common people, who were great admirers of Princes, were of opinion, that the Blazing-Star rather betokened the death of that Queen, then that cruel and bloudy War, which shortly after hapned in Bohemia, and other parts of Germany."[7] The

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[5] Sir Gerard Herbert to Sir Dudley Carleton, in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, vol. X, 1619, p. 25.
[6] Wilson, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James I*, p. 129.
[7] John Rushworth, *Historical Collections of Private Passages of State, Weighty Matters of Law and Remarkable Proceedings in Five Parliaments Beginning the Sixteenth Year of King James, Anno 1618, and Ending the Fifth*

common people, then, regarded Anna as a person of some significance and looked upon her death as an occasion that would warrant the appearance of a sign from Heaven.

Even Wilson, whose tract was intended primarily to criticize the Stuart monarchy, wrote kindly of Anna. While simultaneously reaffirming Foscarini's statements concerning Anna's lack of open political engagement, Wilson praised the Queen's character. He wrote,

> she was in her great Condition a good Woman, not tempted from that height she stood on, to embroyl her spirit much with things below her (as some busy-bodies do) only giving herself content in her own House, with such Recreations as might not make Time tedious to her: And though great Person's Actions are often pried into, and made Envies mark, yet nothing could be fixt upon her, that left any great impression, but that she may have engraven upon her Monument a Character of Virtue.[8]

A similar view was taken by Anthony Weldon in his anti-Stuart tract, *The Court and Character of King James*. Weldon was a disaffected English courtier, dismissed from James's service after he made a series of disparaging remarks in print regarding the character of Scottish people, and his text was a libellous attack on James and his failings as a monarch. Yet, despite Weldon's desire to discredit the Stuart family, he avoids an attack on Anna. In his work, Anna was referred to with admiration as "Queene Anne, that brave Princesse."[9] Weldon also comments on Anna's lack of overt political involvement, which, as with most elite women, was necessarily invisible to the public. Weldon writes that James, despite his many failings, "had a very brave Queen that never crossed his designes, nor intermedled with State affaires, but ever complyed with him."[10] The role of a queen consort, the role of a wife, was meant to be one of outward obedience and submissiveness and, despite her numerous informal political activities, Anna played this role to perfection, an illustration of Goffman's concept of *Idealization*. Throughout her career, she showcased herself as a skilled performer and one who had an expansive understanding of the expectations attached to her social role. Posthumously, Anna's image was used by contemporaries anxious to make a political statement. Such was the

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Year of King Charles, Anno 1629, Digested in Order of Time (London: Gregg International Publishers, 1969 [(1659): STC Wing R2316]), p. 10.

[8] Wilson, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James I*, p. 129.

[9] Anthony Weldon, *The Court and Character of King James Whereunto is Now Added the Court of King of Charles: Continued Unto the Beginning of These Unhappy Time: With Some Observations Upon Him Instead of a Character* (London: Printed by R.I. to be Sold by J. Collins, 1651 [STC Wing W1274]), p. 35.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

case with John Reynolds's work *Vox Coeli*, published in 1624 during the heated debate over a proposed Spanish match for Prince Charles. Reynolds's tract featured a debate over James's pro-Spanish policies between such notable figures as Edward VI, Mary I, Elizabeth I and Anna.[11] It is significant that Anna is featured in this grouping of such notable figures; it is equally significant that in the debate she takes an anti-Spanish position.[12] Anna was a recognizable figure to her contemporaries and, as Charles's mother, Reynolds obviously felt that her invented views on his projected marriage were of importance. If Anna truly was a woman whose influence was negligible, it is unlikely that her image would have been so used by Reynolds.

Following Anna's death, her body was taken by river to her residence of Denmark House, where it was meant to lie in state for a brief period before her funeral. However, the financial straits of the crown at this juncture resulted in a deferment of Anna's funeral that was to last until May 13, 1619. As soon as the necessary capital was raised, the funeral went forward and was a suitably opulent affair. Archbishop Abbott, Anna's factional ally, preached the sermon and Anna was later interred privately in the east end of the Henry VII chapel.[13] In the early modern period, "the royal theatre of death...functioned as a manifestations of political power," and Anna's funeral incorporated much of the splendour and theatricality that the Queen had embraced so effectively in life.[14] The ritual cost nearly three times as much as the funeral of Elizabeth I and the funeral procession to Westminster Abbey offered observers a final glimpse of the important position that cultural patronage had occupied in Anna's life. A grouping of those that Anna had offered patronage to during her lifetime marched in her funeral procession, including men who had belonged to her company of players.[15] Anna's body was translated to Westminster in a hearse that was elaborately painted by John de Critz, an artist who had painted a number of portraits of Anna during her life. Anna was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey in the Stuart tomb in the chapel (originally constructed by Henry VII) that James had designated to hold the remains of his mother, Mary Queen of

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[11] John Reynolds, *Vox Coeli, or Newes From Heauen* (London: Printed for William Jones, 1624 [STC 20946.4]).
[12] For a comprehensive analysis of the state diplomacy and popular unrest concerning Prince Charles's proposed marriage to the Spanish Infanta, see, Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta: The Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).
[13] Bevan, *Royal Westminster Abbey*, p. 119.
[14] Jennifer Woodward, *The Theatre of Death: The Ritual Management of Royal Funerals in Renaissance England, 1570-1625* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), p. 2.
[15] For a full account of Anna's funeral and a listing of those involved, see Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First*, vol. III, pp. 538-545.

Scots, whose decapitated body had been moved to Westminster when James succeeded to the throne. No memorial was raised for Anna, and this often been commented upon by historians as evidence of her lack of importance and the insignificance of her contributions to the stability and success of the Stuart dynasty.[16] Despite these interpretations, Jennifer Woodward has recently argued that the reason for a lack of memorial to Anna could be ascribed to a newly emergent funerary practice of displaying the effigy used in the funeral as opposed to constructing a stone monument.[17] This was what was done following the death of Prince Henry and it is also supported by the fact that Anna's funeral effigy has survived until the present day, likely not destroyed or recycled (as most effigies were) because it was kept on display in the Abbey. Indeed, James himself did not receive a monument, so it would be hasty to assume that the lack of one for Anna is attributable to her perceived unimportance.

Anna's funeral ritual also incorporated another unique innovation: her son, Prince Charles was a participant.[18] This was a break from established tradition and also a direct violation of an Elizabethan ordinance that dictated that only family members of the deceased's own gender were allowed to participate in the funeral.[19] Anna's effigy was a very finely executed one, likely crafted from a death mask and displaying a great amount of detail. The fact that it was crafted with such precision lends further weight to the idea that it was intended for permanent display in place of a stone monument. The wooden effigy was elaborately painted to depict the blue veins in Anna's temples, face and breast and a pimple was even carved into her left cheek. A comparison with portraits of Anna known to be painted from the life suggests that the effigy was very lifelike, even down to the colour of her eyes. The remains of paint on the chest also indicate that the figure was meant to be clothed in a gown that would have exposed much of the breasts; a touch that Anna would no doubt have approved of as such a style was currently the height of fashion, and Anna had always ensured she was at the forefront of fashion.[20]

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[16] See Nigel Llewellyn, "The Royal Body: Monuments to the Dead, For the Living," in Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn, eds., *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540-1660* (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), pp. 218-240.
[17] Woodward, *The Theatre of Death*, p. 171.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 168.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[20] For further information on Anna's funerary effigy and efforts to conserve it, see R.P. Howgrave, "Royal Portraits in Effigy: Some New Discoveries in Westminster Abbey," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 4900 (1953), pp. 465-474 and Anthony Harvey and Richard Mortimer, eds., *The Funeral Effigies of Westminster Abbey* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003 [1994]), pp. 63-67.

While Anna did not have a stone monument erected to her memory, an array of print memorials were issued. One of the writers that Anna had patronized in life, Thomas Heywood, included her in his work detailing the lives of illustrious women from history and myth. Heywood described Anna as "a Princesse of unspotted fame, incomparable clemencie, unmatchable goodnesse, and most remarkable virtue."[21] Heywood further speaks of,

> Queene Anne, whom all degress honoured, all nations loved, and no tongue was ever heard to asperse with the least callumnie: who in her too short eminence here amongst us, was knowne to be the step of dignitie to many, but detriment to none; in whom all were glad, by whom none had ever the least cause of sorrow, unlesse in the lamented losse of so grave and gratious a princesse.[22]

Heywood also included "A Funerall Oade Upon the Death of Anna Panareta," in his text, where he recycled many of the literary tropes used to honour Elizabeth I and compared Anna to the biblical heroines Esther, Judith and Deborah.[23] Heywood further referred to Anna as "a saint, a mother, and a queen."[24]

Likewise, in addition to the display of Anna's effigy, a tablet was hung in the Abbey near the Stuart tomb that commemorated Anna in a Latin inscription. The passage praised Anna as a daughter, wife, mother and sister to kings and a queen consort who would eternally be a queen in Heaven.[25] The appropriation of Elizabethan imagery in describing Anna (a technique she herself adopted in order to cement her popularity with the English people) can be further seen in an elegy composed by Patrick Hannay in Anna's honour. In his text, Hannay writes, "I grant nor Sonne, nor Subject good, can smother Griefe, for so great, and good, a Queen and Mother."[26] Hannay also asserts "it's because our Cynthia left this sphere, the world wears blacke, because she moves not here."[27] During her tenure as queen consort of England, Anna recognized the role expectations, so recently set by Elizabeth, shared by the English population regarding the visual representation of the monarchy. While James disliked lavish ceremonial and

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[21] Thomas Heywood, *Gynaikeion, or Nine Bookes of Various History Concerning Women: Inscribed by the Names of the Nine Muses* (London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1624 [STC 13326]), p. 123.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 123-125.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 124.
[25] Sandford, *A Genealogical History of the Kings and Queens of England*, p. 559.
[26] Patrick Hannay, *Two Elegies, on the Late Death of our Soveraigne Queene Anne, With Epitaphes* (London: Printed by Nicholas Oyes, 1619 [STC Wing 12749]), p. 1.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

sitting for his portrait, Anna shrewdly comprehended the importance of these forms of presentation and cultivated them. In doing so, she appropriated many of the devices and techniques that Elizabeth had utilized. Thus, from the moment that the Stuart royal family arrived in England, Anna was "the recipient of much of the gendered encomiastic language formalized under Elizabeth."[28] After her death, writers freely described the deceased Anna in terms that had originally been applied to Elizabeth, and this only furthered Anna's popularity. While James "was not like his Predecessor, the late Queen of famous memory," Anna actively cultivated Elizabeth's image and was so successful in her use of it that linking her with Elizabeth was to continue after her passing.[29]

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[28] Perry, *The Making of Jacobean Culture*, p. 165.
[29] Wilson, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James I*, p. 13.

Conclusion: Reassessments and Reconsiderations: a New Interpretation

Any interpretation of Anna of Denmark should be willing to acknowledge her political involvements at the early Stuart English court and place them on a level of equal importance to her cultural activities. In doing so, this work advocates an approach wherein Anna is viewed in the context of the world which she inhabited. Early modern elite women were barred from direct participation in offices of political power. The "high" institutions of Parliament, the Privy Council and the law courts were ones to which women were denied membership. Recent scholarship on the court, however, has shown that informal political influence was often exercised on a large scale. Through patronage, influence with family and friends, and participation in the rich language of cultural symbolism, elite women possessed the ability to act as political agents. It is within this context of informal political networks and expressions that early modern queens consort should be viewed. "Patronage was one of the most important aspects of the monarchy,"[1] and queens consort had an enlarged level of patronage that they were able to utilize to their advantage. Anna was involved in an array of patronage activities and, through these activities, she was able to position herself as a woman of influence and power. Through her participation in masquing, Anna was able to manipulate the highly ritualized language of symbols that was a primary aspect of political discourse at the Jacobean court.

In addition to her more explicit forms of political engagement, Anna's masquing activities allowed her to display herself to the court and foreign ambassadors as a *spectacular* queen, the literal embodiment of the virtues expected of a Renaissance monarch. Given her own strong sense of her elevated dynastic background, this type of visual display, alongside her passion for dress and lavish adornment, and her use of portraiture, would have been ideally suited to her. The significance of Anna's involvement in masquing and other forms of cultural output should thus not be downplayed or viewed as trivial pastimes engaged in by a foolish woman. Through masquing, Anna crafted a persona for herself at the English court as a cultural icon and continued many of the tropes of display established by Elizabeth I. "The first Stuart

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[1] Harris, "Women and Politics," p. 259.

queen inaugurated important and lasting cultural developments at the English court,"[2] and the political importance of this form of expression should not be underestimated.

It is equally important, however, not to overestimate the importance of Anna's masquing activities. It was not the only form of political expression open to her, nor the only one of which she availed herself. Anna ceased to be an active performer in court masques after 1612 (when she instead chose the role of privileged spectator) yet she did not cease to act as a political agent. Like all early modern elite women, she had strict limits placed upon her in terms of her ability to exercise political agency, yet this does mean that she was rendered inactive. She found, through her role as queen consort, ample opportunities for political engagement. Understanding the role of queens consort in the period, the venues that were open to them for political expression, the societal expectations placed upon them, and the manner in which they negotiated their roles and performed as skilled social actors (adept in the arts of self-presentation and performance management) can provide the historian with a more textured understanding of the experiences of elite women within early modern English society. Through an appreciation of the informal networks of political influence and an acknowledgement of the flexibility of social roles and the capacity of individuals for agency within the overarching framework of a socially constructed institution, we achieve an enhanced understanding of the life and career experiences of aristocratic early modern women. In her self-presentation, Anna engaged in the execution of a social role that was familiar to many elite women of the period. Aristocratic women at the Jacobean court were skilled social actors that navigated and upheld the role expectations held of them by their audiences while simultaneously engaging in performative strategies that enabled them to advance their own political agendas and act as political agents. Recognizing the array of venues for political action and expression that were open to elite women in the period entails that "the study of early modern political history should be rethought to take account of the presence and influence of women."[3]

An analysis of queens consort (the top of the female hierarchy at court) can illuminate the powerful political positions such women were able to occupy. Anna of Denmark was a skilled social performer, adept in the arts of self-presentation and

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[2] Pugh, "A Portrait of Queen Anne," p. 174.
[3] Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 345.

performance management. Goffman stressed "when an individual becomes involved in the maintenance of a rule, he tends also to become committed to a particular image of self."[4] Throughout her career at court, Anna crafted and maintained an image of herself as a spectacular Renaissance queen, an artistically and politically influential queen worthy of honour and respect. Goffman has described the manner in which, "in the end, our conception of our role becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality."[5] Throughout her career, Anna tailored her performances to be expressive of the behaviour and actions expected of an early modern queen consort and her role as queen was something that she was attentive to with the utmost sincerity, intolerant towards any that would dare to treat her with anything less than the high level of respect to which she was entitled as a queen. Traditional interpretations of Anna have painted a picture of her as an insignificant woman, unsuitable for serious analysis. Essentially, "the needle has been stuck on her stupidity, frivolity, extravagance, silliness, impulsiveness, and finally insignificance."[6] This is a frivolous interpretation that must be jettisoned.

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[4] Goffman, *Interaction Ritual*, p. 50.
[5] Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, pp. 19-20.
[6] Bergeron, *Practicing Renaissance Scholarship*, p. 92.

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Appendix A: the Private Catholicism of Anna of Denmark

Throughout this paper, I have made references to Anna of Denmark's Catholicism. Students of early modern Europe are all well-versed in the religious revolutions of the period and the contentiousness both among and within states that religious divisions caused during the period. Thus, it may seem strange that Anna's religious beliefs are considered in detail only in appendix form, especially when she inhabited a world where the "dynamic role of religious…ideals in constructing authority in early modern Europe" has long been asserted by historians.[1] I have chosen to examine Anna's beliefs only at the conclusion of an analysis of her career for much the same reasons that Leeds Barroll chose to discuss them also within an appendix to the rest of his work on Anna's political and cultural career. The reason for this is simply that Anna's *private* faith does not seem to have had any impact upon her career as a queen consort and a courtier in the slightest. While she discretely converted to Catholicism and appears to have adhered to that faith until the end of her life, she did not, except very rarely, exhibit her religious sentiments in public and they appear to have played little role in her political activities. Anna's political faction, especially in England, was composed of individuals that were militantly Protestant and Anna never made efforts to recruit supporters of the same faith as her. Her political agenda ran counter to her faith, and she never attempted to alter this situation. The English families to which Anna adhered "continued a tradition of militant, anti-Catholic Protestantism that stretched back to Sir Philip Sidney and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Anne would not find, indeed probably did not look for, kindred religious spirits in this group."[2] Anna even set herself in direct opposition to the Catholic faction at court, led by the influential Howard family, and often acted antagonistically towards them, regardless of their shared religious affinity. In this respect, "she seems to have decided early in her marriage that she would not make it [her Catholicism] a factional issue. Therefore it is not remarkable that her patronage and involvement in court intrigue, both religious and secular, did not observe neat confessional boundaries."[3] Because Anna did not allow her private faith to become a matter of public record and because she remained, both politically and publicly, a member of the Reformed faith, it is

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[1] Monod, *The Power of Kings*, p. 328.
[2] Peter McCullough, "Preaching to a Court Papist? Donne's Sermon Before Queen Anne, December 1617," *John Donne Journal*, 14 (1995), p. 65.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

unnecessary to discuss her beliefs as they came into play in her political and cultural actions. "Anne clearly did not let any confessional loyalties dictate her politicking at her husband's court," and historians should not assume that she did.[4] Her religious beliefs are, largely, irrelevant to a discussion of her career at court.

Despite (or perhaps in reaction to) her orthodox Lutheran upbringing and her exposure to the strict righteousness of the Scottish Calvinist Kirk, Anna of Denmark converted to Catholicism while Queen of Scotland. Anna's conversion to Catholicism was first noted in a letter written in 1601 or 1602 by Father Robert Abercrombie, a Jesuit priest in Scotland, to his superior in the order, General Aquaviva. In this letter, Abercrombie reports that Anna was converted in either 1598 or 1599 (depending on when the letter was actually penned), following three days of instruction in the faith from Abercrombie himself. Abercrombie also notes that, in the years leading up to 1601, Anna had managed to receive the sacrament nine times.[5] A recent work has suggested that Anna's friendship with Henrietta Stewart, Countess of Huntly, was instrumental to her conversion. Huntly was a Catholic, having been raised in France, and supplied Anna with a Catholic catechism.[6] It is probable that she also offered the Queen some early instruction in the faith. Regardless of the manner in which Anna's conversion came about, it appears from Abercrombie's letter that by 1602 James was aware of his wife's religious feelings and, apparently, had actually given her permission to hold Catholic services in the privacy of her bedchamber if only a select few were involved and no word of what was going on was permitted to leave the confines of those chambers. Thus, James persuaded Anna "to accept freedom to practice her religion quietly, discretely, with the small coterie of court Catholics. The compromise worked. Anne's Catholicism remained an open secret, confined to court."[7] In furtherance of this, Anna had written to Pope Clement VIII in 1601 to petition for permission to publicly attend Calvinist services while simultaneously practicing privately as a Catholic.[8] In response, "the pope sent a message of goodwill along with relics, rosaries, and other devotional objects to Queen Anne, to sustain her faith and apparently encourage her to extend her religious influence over her husband and children," although there is no evidence to suggest that Anna ever

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[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Peter Davidson and Thomas M. McCoog, "Father Robert's Convert: The Private Catholicism of Anne of Denmark," *Times Literary Supplement*, 5095 (2000), p. 16.
[6] Meikle and Payne, "Anne of Denmark," p. 195.
[7] Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding*, p. 67.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

actively endeavoured to influence either James or her children.[9] Indeed, Henry was a convinced Protestant, something about which Anna seems to have had no qualms.

As with so many other aspects of her character and career, traditional examinations of Anna have often treated her religious beliefs dismissively. Within these types of analysis Anna is, first and foremost, a fool – a queen who, despite her privileged upbringing, possessed no wisdom and very little scholarship. Viewed against these assumptions, historians have often been quick to deem her Catholicism a trivial act on the part of a trivial woman, further proof of her idiocy and lack of intelligence. To this end, her conversion has been derisively described by one biographer as "her dallyings with Rome."[10] Yet, Anna was acutely aware of the potential difficulties that her Catholicism could cause to her husband and his crown, to say nothing of her own personal popularity with her subjects, both Scottish and English. To this end, Anna endeavoured to keep her religious sentiments a closely guarded secret, and she proved very successful at it. As the Venetian ambassador noted, "although in public she went to the Heretical Church with her husband, yet in private she observed the Catholic rite. With the King's consent the mass was sometimes secretly celebrated for her."[11] Scaramelli further commented on Anna's outward obedience, writing "the Queen is most obedient to her husband, and goes with him to the heretical services."[12] Throughout her time in England, her Catholicism was something which was guessed at but never known for certain to those outside of the immediate royal circle. Even Anna's ally in the advancement of Villiers, Archbishop Abbott, never found cause to comment on the conformity of her religious beliefs. English observers pegged her as a loyal Protestant and she did few things to contradict this perception. Simultaneously, many foreign observers were convinced of her allegiance to the Pope and this often led them to view her with increased admiration.

In the matter of her religious feelings, as in so many other aspects of her character, Anna was highly cognizant of the societal expectations placed upon her. Likewise, she was aware of the flexibility of many of those expectations and the extent to which they could shift depending upon the audience. Performing as a skilled social actor, she tailored her modes of self-display to be attuned to her audience's expectations. In front

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[9] Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, p. 43.
[10] Ward, "Anne of Denmark," p. 436.
[11] Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. X, May 28, 1603, p. 10.
[12] *Ibid.*, July 23, 1603, p. 68.

of her fellow courtiers, she was a Protestant, and a loyal one, who dutifully attended services and whose image was lauded by polemists as that of a godly woman. As Strickland notes, "the prelates of the English Church were satisfied with her religious principles," and so were the majority of her subjects.[13] Indeed, Anna not only went to Anglican services with James, she also made a point of employing reformist preachers in her household and attending services on her own as well as in James's company.[14] However, before foreign ambassadors, especially those from the Catholic powers, Anna let the mask slip a little and gave subtle hints of her true religious feelings. From both groupings, both audiences, she won nothing but praise and thus further enhanced her reputation. Her necessary lack of openness concerning her Catholicism has led to confusion for historians. Anna was never openly Catholic, and this has led many to believe that she was also not sincerely so and dabbled with the faith as a way to relieve boredom, much as she supposedly dabbled with masques as a way to amuse herself. Samuel Gardiner noted that Anna "was not of the stuff of which martyrs are made."[15] Other writers have been less kind and have bluntly denied Anna's religious convictions. "Very likely she adopted Catholicism in the half-trifling way in which idle persons sometimes occupy themselves with a new faith. Her conversion did not make her serious or devout, nor did it strengthen her character."[16] It is true that Anna was a politician, not a martyr, yet, there is no reason to doubt that she was sincere in her beliefs, especially once one acknowledges that, by necessity, she needed to keep a low profile in that regard. As Davidson and McCoog note, "Anne of Denmark seems consciously to have tried to live as a Catholic in so far as her circumstances permitted."[17] And martyrs are rare at any time.

Albert J. Loomie, assessing Anna's religious sentiments, plausibly suggests that it would been virtually impossible for Anna to have retained her influence and popularity, especially in the post-1605 Gunpowder Plot climate, had she openly worshipped as a Catholic.[18] Hence, Anna's lack of a public, unabashed Catholicism need not be construed

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[13] Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, p. 107.
[14] McCullough, "Preaching to a Court Papist," pp. 62-63.
[15] Samuel R. Gardiner, *The History of England From the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-1642* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1883), vol. I, p. 116.
[16] Willson, *King James VI and I*, p. 95.
[17] Davidson and McCoog, "Father Robert's Convert," p. 17.
[18] Albert J. Loomie, "King James I's Catholic Consort," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 34 (1971), pp. 303-316. For a comprehensive review of the ill-fated Gunpowder Plot of 1605 and the anti-Catholic climate that was generated in the wake of its discovery, see, Antonia Fraser, *Faith and Treason: The Story of the Gunpowder Plot*

as evidence of lack of conviction. "There were in early modern England an underestimated number of Catholics for whom routine compliance with the Church of England and committed Catholicism were not mutually exclusive."[19] If Anna's Catholicism had been publicly known, it would have been very detrimental to James's authority and to her own – thus making it likely that she operated in England as a Church Papist. One has only to look two decades into the future to see the intense suspicion with which Charles I's openly Catholic consort, Henrietta Maria, was viewed to suggest Anna was wise to keep her Catholicism hidden. To please her audience and avoid stirring up controversy by violating the role expectations placed upon her as Queen of England and mother to the heir to the throne, "the Queen, like so many conforming Catholics, opted for conformity to the routine non-eucharistic services of the church instead of the staunch recusancy urged by Catholic missionary propaganda."[20]

The opposite pole of the suggestions of some historians that Anna's conversion was insincere is that, quite apart from all the known evidence, she was a rapidly staunch Catholic who clung stubbornly to her beliefs in the face of basic common sense. In this interpretation, Anna clung doggedly to her Catholicism, refusing to recognize that it was costing her popularity and could endanger her husband's crown. Scholars who have chosen to describe Anna's faith in these terms have linked it to her supposed infatuation with Spain, although this also goes against the available evidence. Hence, it has been noted that Anna was "violently solicitous of Catholicism, especially of Spanish Catholicism."[21] Such a view does not conform in any way to the evidence that has survived concerning Anna's actions. Rather than being "violently solicitous" of Catholicism, Anna appears, on the contrary, to have taken great pains to conceal her religious feelings and to never allow them to play a role in the factional politics in which she so successfully played a leading part.

While unabashedly worshipping as a Catholic would surely have been a grave political mistake for Anna to have made, both in England and Scotland, her beliefs were

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(New York: Doubleday, 1996) and Jenny Wormald, "Gunpowder, Treason and Scots," *Journal of British Studies*, 24 (1985), pp. 141-168, and Samuel R. Gardiner, *What Gunpowder Plot Was* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1897). For further information on Catholicism in England during this period, see, John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975) and Marie B. Rowlands, "Recusant Women, 1560-1640," in Mary Prior, ed., *Women in English Society, 1500-1800* (London: Methuen, 1985).

[19] McCullough, "Preaching to a Court Papist," p. 61.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

[21] Williamson, *The Myth of the Conqueror*, p. 83.

often used by James to his political advantage, particularly in Scotland.[22] In the years before Elizabeth's death, when James's inheritance to the English throne was far from totally secure, he engaged in a secretive campaign to round up international allies to support his bid for the English throne. In this, he often found Anna's Catholicism highly advantageous, and she, just as eager for the English throne as he, was ready and willing to assist him. She corresponded with Catholic powers, confessing her faith and suggesting that, were James to become King of England, she could persuade him to offer toleration to Catholics, perhaps even to raise his heirs as Catholics. James was aware, indeed supportive, of his wife's activities. Coming from his pen, protestations of respect for Catholics may have been less believable to the rulers he was courting, and there was also the risk that his Calvinist ministers and courtiers would find out about the letters and he would lose political support from his subjects. With Anna doing the writing, however, James had plausible deniability of his involvement, and his wife's activities could always be explained convincingly away as the foolishness of a woman. Through his partnership with his wife in this matter, James "endeavoured, whilst posing as the Protestant candidate at home, to commend himself to the Catholic powers abroad," and the attempt proved effective.[23] When James received letters from the Pope in later 1600 or early 1601, it was Anna who wrote the response. The letter bore Anna's arms and her signature, and she wrote that the letter was composed and sent upon James's authority. By using his wife's pen, James ensured a measure of plausible deniability should the letter be discovered. James, himself the son of Catholic parents, raised within the harsh strictures of the Calvinist Kirk, and frequently involved with Catholic favourites, was inclined to be tolerant towards Catholics and appears to have felt that their reputation as treasonous plotters of sedition was often exaggerated. James felt no qualms about approaching Catholic states for assistance and support and espoused, throughout his reign, a general tolerance towards Catholics.[24] As Queen of England, Anna kept her Catholicism in the shadows, except on rare occasions. The most public of these occasions was at her English coronation, where, to the surprise of many, she refused to receive the Anglican Communion. Scaramelli reported that, when offered the sacrament,

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[22] A full review of James's dealing with Catholic powers prior to accession to the English throne can be found in Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*.

[23] J. Duncan Mackie, "The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI in Italy Prior to his Accession to the English Throne," *The Scottish Historical Review*, 21 (1924), pp. 269-270.

[24] For more on James's personal attitudes towards his Catholic subjects, see, Robert Peters, "Some Catholic Opinions of King James VI and I," *Recusant History*, 10 (1970), pp. 292-303.

"Her Majesty, after saying 'no' very quietly once or twice, declined to make any further answer," even though the assembled bishops and archbishops endeavoured to persuade her.[25] Even this, however, was not interpreted as conclusive proof of her Catholicism – to many it might plausibly have been attributable to her Lutheranism. As Queen of Scots, while her supposed popery was occasionally hinted at, she publicly worshipped as a Lutheran and had, on James's authority, her own Lutheran pastor from Denmark.

There was also an incident that occurred shortly after James acceded to the English throne which forced Anna to make a public denial of her Catholic beliefs, one that was effective in convincing her husband's ministers of her commitment to the Reformed faith. The English authorities detained and questioned an Englishman named Sir Anthony Standen who was known to have travelled to Rome and returned to England bearing a letter from the Pope to Anna, accompanied by tokens such as an Agnus Dei and various relics, also for Anna.[26] In the letter, Clement VIII commended Anna for her beliefs and urged her to use her influence upon the King. For Anna, "the Standen affair proved a great embarrassment and might well have endangered her relations with the King," to say nothing of how it would have affected her popularity with the English people.[27] Anna, however, adhering to her policy of not allowing confessional concerns to affect her public agenda, denied her involvement with Standen. Anna's performance was an effective one on this occasion and, regarding the affair, Cecil wrote to the French ambassador that if the Pope believed Anna to be Catholic, "he shall take his princely word that she is wronged and he abused; for although when she was in Scotland, she misliked many of those precise opinions which were maintained by most of those churches, yet for matters of faith she never was tied to the Romish assertions."[28] While Anna simultaneously denied her Catholicism to James's ministers, she privately waited until the controversy had subsided and then interceded with James to secure Standen's freedom.[29]

On her deathbed, Anna was reported to have died as a Protestant, something which ensured that, posthumously, her image and character were shown respect and honour. Sir

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[25] Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, in *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, vol. X, August 13, 1603, p. 81.
[26] For a full analysis of this episode, see, L. Hicks, "The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen in 1603, Part I," *Recusant History*, 5 (1960), pp. 91-127, Hicks, "The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen in 1603, Part III," *Recusant History*, 6 (1962), pp. 163-195, and Hicks, "The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen in 1603, Part IV," *Recusant History*, 7 (1963), pp. 50-81.
[27] Hicks, "The Embassy of Sir Anthony Standen in 1603, Part IV," p. 59.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 54.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

Edward Harwood wrote to Sir Dudley Carleton of the Queen's death, saying she "gave a good account of her faith, free from all popery."[30] While Anna may not have had a Catholic priest at hand to administer the sacrament of Extreme Unction or to hear her final confession, her religious preferences in life do seem to have leaned towards Catholicism. A post-mortem inventory of her goods showed that, while she owned a number of Protestant tracts, she also possessed an array of religious art work, much of it dealing with themes that would have been deemed blasphemous by those of the Reformed faith. She owned paintings that depicted the crucifixion, in addition to images of the saints and the Virgin Mary.[31] Likewise, although her funeral was conducted according to Anglican rites, and she died intestate, certain Catholic elements were incorporated into the treatment of her corpse (whether these were due to a last wish that Anna may have communicated to someone close to her or were the result of the independent actions of someone who was aware of her beliefs can never be known). Three days after her death, Anna's internal organs were removed from her body and were taken in a nocturnal procession for a quiet burial in Westminster Abbey. This practice of separately burying the deceased's internal organs at night-time, was a Catholic one and was no longer typically employed in English funerals, and can, perhaps, be read as a final expression of Anna's faith and her agency in practicing it.[32]

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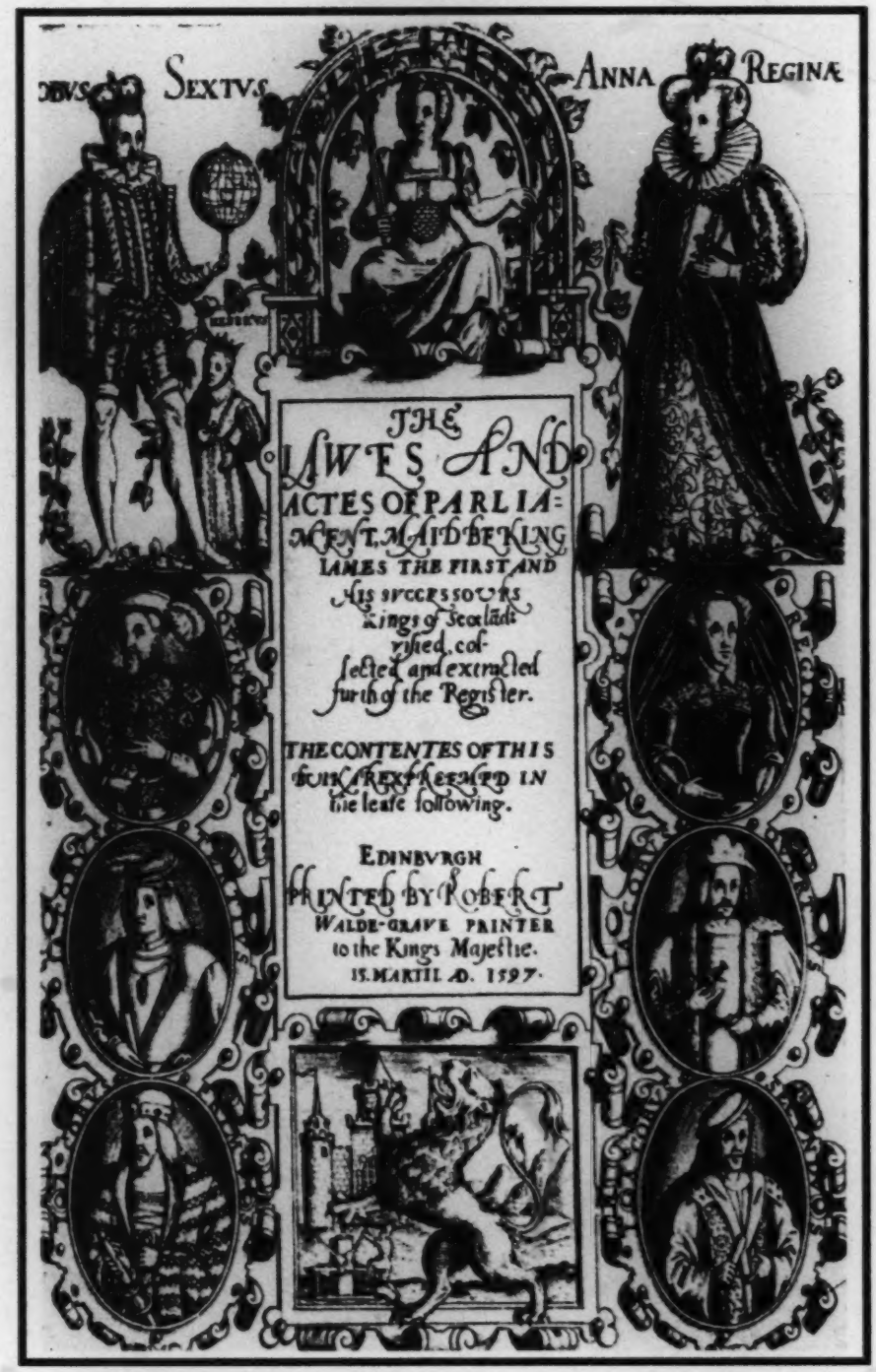
[30] Sir Edward Harwood to Carleton, in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, vol. X, 1619, p. 21.
[31] For a complete listing of the inventory, see, Payne, "An Inventory," pp. 27-42.
[32] McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage*, p. 205.

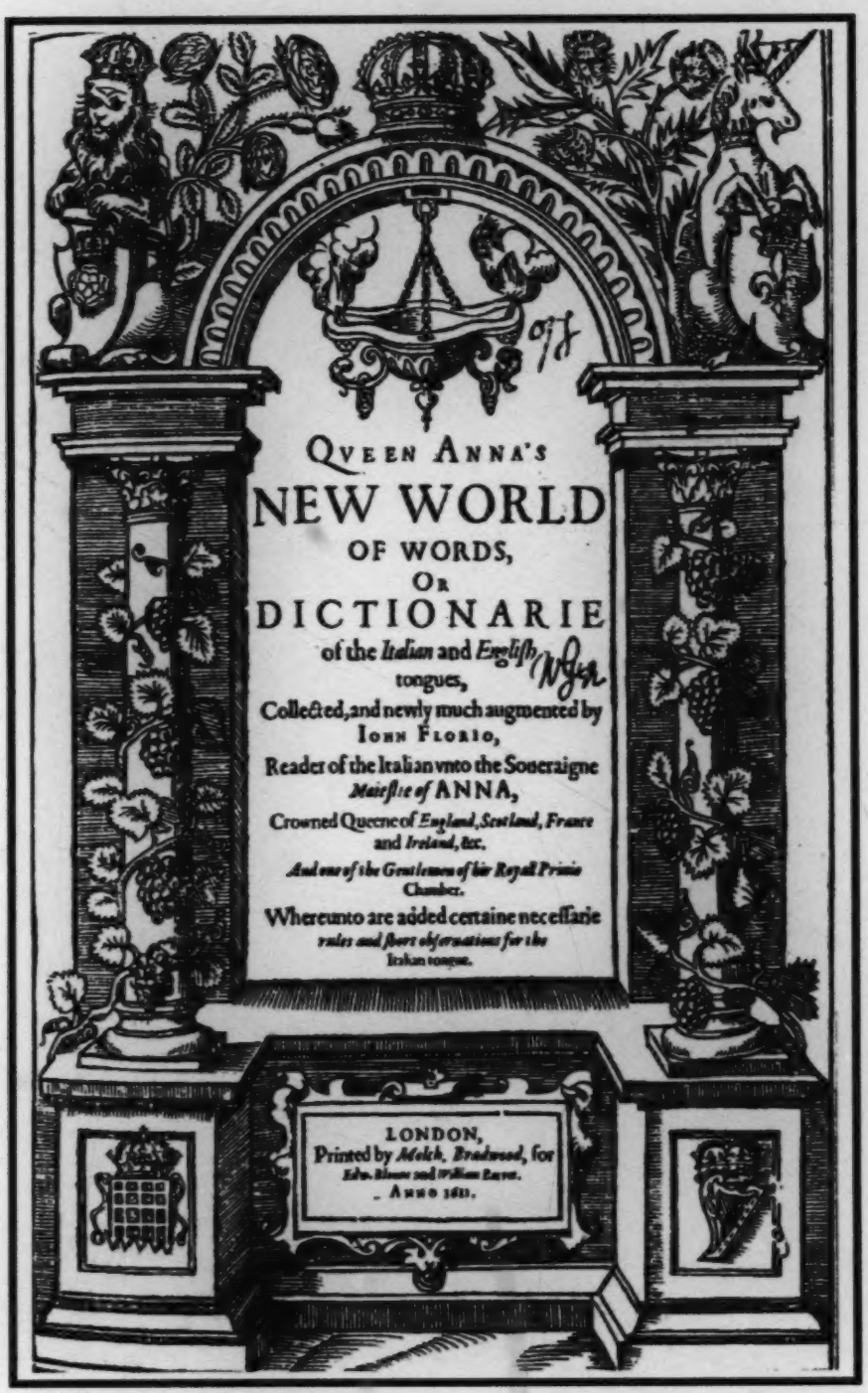
Appendix B: Images of Anna of Denmark

The most High and Mighty Monarch IAMES by the grace of God King of Great Britaine. France. and Ireland. Borne the 19 of Iune. 1566.
The most excellent Princesse ANNA Queene of Great Britaine. France and Ireland. Borne the 12 of October. 1574.

1. Engraving by Renold Elstrack of King James and Queen Anna featuring their respective coats of arms and mottos (date unknown).



2. Title page engraving from *The Lawes and Actes of Parliament*, printed by Robert Walde-Grave (1597).



3. Title page from John Florio's *Queen Anna's New World of Worlds* (1611).

High and mighty and most vertuous Princesse ANNE Queene of Great Britaine France and Ireland &c.
Simon Passaeus fecit et excudit
Crispinus Hillard excudebat

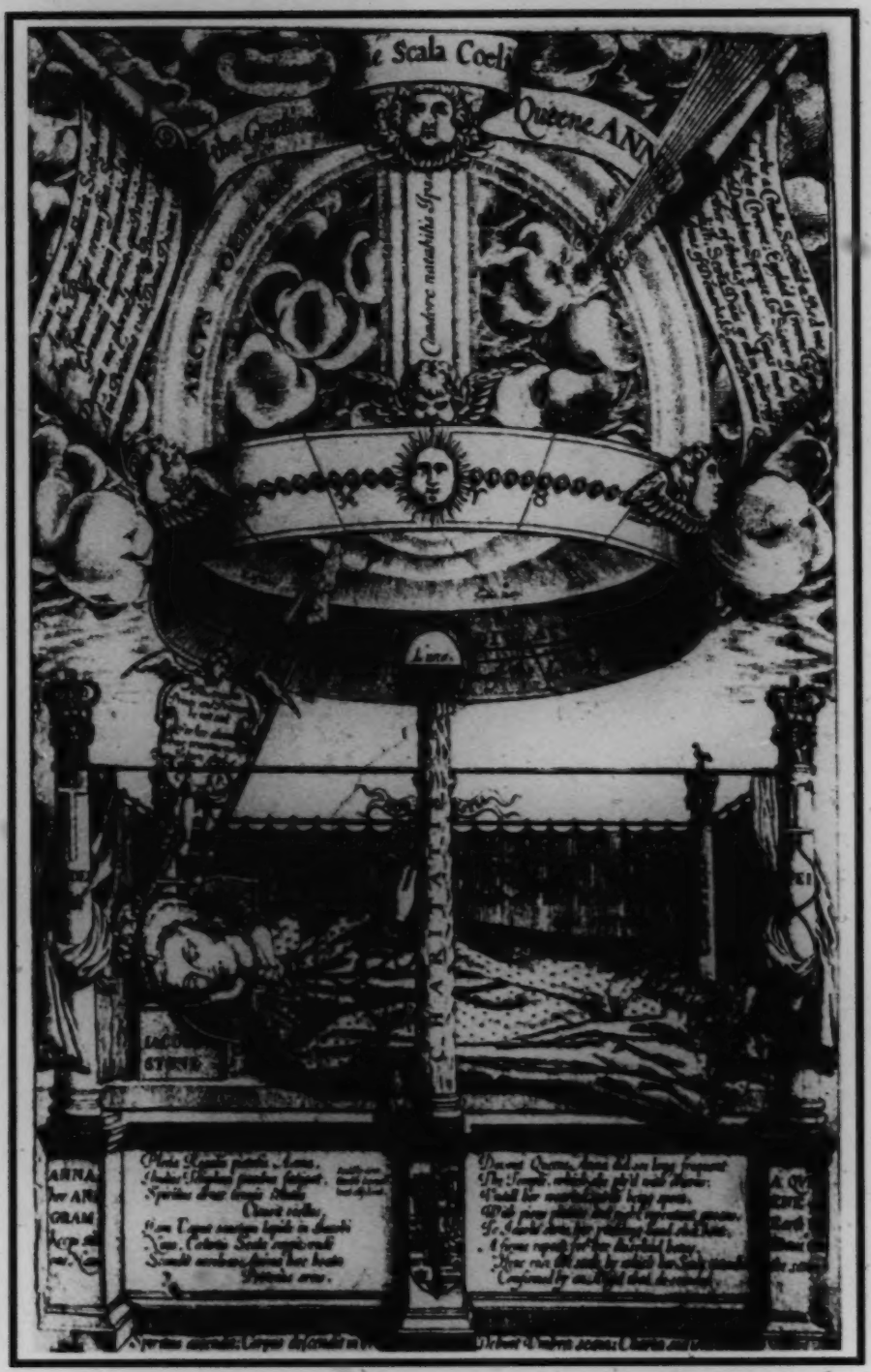
4. Engraving of Queen Anna on horseback by Simon Van de Passe (date unknown). Anna's motto and coat of arms are featured in the top right corner and Windsor Castle is depicted on the left.

5. Sketch of a headdress designed by Inigo Jones for Anna to wear during her performance as Bel-Anna, Queen of the Ocean, in the *Masque of Queens* (c. 1609). This headdress is more elaborate and sophisticated than those designed for the other masquers also portraying queens.

6. Portrait of Anna of Denmark after Paul Van Somer. National Portrait Gallery, London (c. 1617). Anna's wears jewels in her hair in the shapes of an "S" jewel and a crowned "C4."

7. Portrait of Queen Anna with her dogs by Paul Van Somer, or a member of his studio. Collection of Her Majesty the Queen (c. 1617). In this image, Anna's dogs (Italian greyhounds) have her initials on their collars, her motto is featured above her head, an oak tree (symbol of steadfastness) with an owl (wisdom) perched in it are figured in the background, and Oatlands is also pictured behind the Queen (complete with the palace's new gateway designed by Inigo Jones).

8. Portrait of Anna by Marcus Gheeraerts, Woburn Abbey (c. 1605-1610). Roy Strong, in *The English Icon*, plate 305, suggests that the portrait was intended as a gift for Lucy Russell. Similar in style to the Van Somer portrait (Figure 7), Anna wears a jewel in the form of a crowned S on her collar and a C4 jewel in her hair. Her motto appears at her feet.



9. The *Scala Coeli of the Gratious Queene Anne* by an anonymous engraver (c. 1619).

10. Sketch for Queen Anna's Catafalque by Inigo Jones (1619), never constructed.

11. Queen Anna's funeral effigy, preserved in Westminster Abbey.

12. Engraving of Queen Anna by Simon Van de Passe, from *Baziliωlogia or A Booke of Kinges Beeing the true and liuely Effigies of all our English Kings from the Conquest vntill this present* (1618).